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I. Introduction

1. In accordance with its schedule of work, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), as endorsed by the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, continued consideration at its fourth session of the three programme elements included in its mandate.

2. In accordance with its mandate, IFF adopted a decision proposed by the Co-Chairmen by which the Forum recommended the texts of programme elements I-III negotiated at the fourth session for adoption by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eighth session (see chap. II, draft decision).

3. IFF also reiterated the provisions of paragraph 12 of its report on its first session (E/CN.17/IFF/1997/4) and expressed its appreciation to the organizers of government-led initiatives undertaken in support of its fourth session, including:

(a) An open-ended international expert meeting on special needs and requirements of developing countries with low forest cover and unique types of forests, under the initiative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

(b) A presentation on initiative on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests in support of IFF programme element III, under the initiative of the Governments of Costa Rica and Canada;

(c) A presentation on implementing the proposals of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with the Governments of Costa Rica, Malawi and Viet Nam;

(d) A presentation on profitable rehabilitation of degraded forests sponsored by the Government of Turkey;

(e) A presentation on the outcome of a South Pacific subregional workshop on IFF issues, sponsored by the Government of Australia;

(f) A presentation on the theme "Greener forest: extension services and training for sustainable forest management", sponsored by the Government of Sweden.

4. IFF expressed its appreciation to Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations that had organized various side events and presentations during the session, which had provided for an in-depth consideration of a number of important issues of the IFF work programme and enriched its deliberations.

5. IFF expressed its appreciation to the IFF secretariat as well as member organizations of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) for their important work and contributions in support of its deliberations.

6. IFF expressed its appreciation to those Governments and organizations that had made generous voluntary contributions in support of the work of IFF and its secretariat.

II. Matters calling for action by the Commission on Sustainable Development

The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, in accordance with its mandate, recommends to the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eighth session, the adoption of the following draft decision:

Matters relating to the work of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session

The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eighth session, adopts the programme elements of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests contained in the annex below.

Annex

Programme elements of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests

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I. Promoting and facilitating the implementation of the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and reviewing, monitoring and reporting on progress in the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests

A. Promoting and facilitating implementation

Conclusions

1. The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) welcomed the commitment, expressed by Governments, international organizations and other partners, to the implementation of all the Forum's proposals for action and noted with appreciation the many activities at the national level initiated by countries, groups of countries and international organizations. It noted the added attention given to the social and environmental services provided by forests as well as the challenges to address these issues. It emphasized the need for the effective involvement of relevant interested parties, as well as the improvement of institutional arrangements and appropriate ways and means of communication.

2. The Forum underscored the need for implementation of strategies in terms of investment, mobilization of domestic and international resources and — in the case of developing countries, with special attention to least developed countries and developing countries with low forest cover — appropriate financial mechanisms and/or measures including support through official development assistance (ODA).

3. The Forum considered national forest programmes, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), to be a viable framework for addressing forest sector issues, including implementation of the IPF proposals for action in a holistic, comprehensive and multisectoral manner. It took note of the national case studies prepared under the Six-country Initiative of Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda and the United Kingdom, as well as of the Baden-Baden workshop and its results. This initiative was considered an important contribution to the assessment of the IPF proposals for action at the national level, and for supporting implementation work at national and subnational levels. The Initiative had recognized the diversity of national conditions and interested parties in assessing the relevance and prioritization of the proposals at the national level, and had also produced a useful Practitioners Guide, which should be revised to facilitate assessment exercises. In order to enhance the implementation of the proposals for action adopted by IPF, the Forum identified the need for effective follow-up and long-term commitment at all levels.

4. The Forum noted that the IPF proposals for action were numerous and complex and covered a wide range of important issues. The Forum recognized that sustainable forest management was a long-term process and goal and countries would not, within a limited time-frame, be able to show substantial progress in capacity-building, policy development, planning processes and creation of enabling and supporting infrastructure. The Forum underlined the need for sustained efforts in implementing the IPF proposals.

5. The Forum recognized that IPF implementation by developing countries with low forest cover merited special attention. It called on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as the lead agency for this programme element, to expedite the development of a definition of low forest cover as contained in the IPF proposals for action. It invited the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as well as the relevant environmental conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity,[a] the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/AC.237/18 (Part II) Add.1 and Corr.1, annex 1) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II), and international financing institutions to look into and reflect on the special needs of developing countries with low forest cover, and called upon the informal, high-level Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) to coordinate its work in supporting these countries.

6. The Forum expressed support for the work carried out by the informal, high-level Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests. It noted that the Task Force had been and continued to be an effective means of support of the IPF/Forum process and of informal inter-agency coordination on forests. In future, the work of the Task Force should be strengthened and further developed.

7. The Forum took note of the continuing monitoring of the effects of airborne pollutants on forests within member countries of the International Cooperative Programme on Forests (ICP Forests), as well as the establishment of new protocols dealing with nitrogen, heavy metals and persistent pollutants under the Geneva Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution,[b] as well as the beginning of regional cooperation on a monitoring network on acid rain among countries in Eastern Asia. It noted with appreciation the offer by some countries to extend their cooperation to interested countries not presently participating in international networks.

8. The Forum also took note of recent regional and international initiatives that are supportive of implementation of the IPF proposals for action, including the strengthening of the Sub-Network of Protected Areas of the Amazon, agreed by the Ministers of Environment of the Parties to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, in March 1998; recent developments within the framework of the Central American Convention on Forests; the regional workshops on IPF implementation held in Indonesia in February 1998, in Senegal in April 1998 and in Chile in June 1998, under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Forestry Commissions for Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin

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[a] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[b] See *1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution and its Protocols* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.II.E.24).

America and the Caribbean; the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe held in Portugal in July 1998; and the G-8 Forest Action Program endorsed by G-8 Heads of State in May 1998 in England (the Group of Eight, or G-8, comprises the United States of America, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada and the Russian Federation).

Proposals for action

9. The Forum agreed that the following are particularly important for the implementation of IPF proposals for action:

(a) Provision, taking into consideration the relevant chapters of Agenda 21[c] and paragraph 10 of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles),[d] by the international donor community, including international organizations and international financial institutions of increased financial resources, including through innovative strategies to mobilize finance, technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology at the international and domestic levels, as well as through better use of existing mechanisms and measures, to support national forest programmes in developing countries, including countries with low forest cover and particularly the least developed countries;

(b) Promotion, where appropriate, of an integrated approach by countries through their national forest programmes as defined by IPF, and in collaboration with international organizations, to the implementation of the IPF proposals for action and forest-related work as set out under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(c) Creation and/or strengthening, by countries and international organizations, of initiatives, approaches and partnerships, which could include partnership agreements, to encourage long-term political commitment; relevant, effective, sustained and reliable donor support; and participation by the private sector and major groups; as well as recognition of the special role of ODA in meeting the needs of developing countries, in particular least developed countries and countries with low forest cover;

(d) A systematic assessment, by all countries, of the IPF proposals for action and planning for their implementation in the context of countries' own national processes aimed at sustainable forest management;

(e) Implementation by countries of the IPF proposals for action in the context of their national forest programmes/national policy framework in a coordinated manner and with the participation of all interested parties. Clear objectives and criteria should help promote effective implementation of sustainable forest management. The policy framework should be kept under review in order to

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[c] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution I, annex II.

[d] Ibid., annex III.

continue to embody capabilities for intersectoral planning, coordination and implementation, and adequate resource allocation;

(f) Establishment, by each country, of a focal point to guide and coordinate the implementation and assessment process of the IPF proposals for action, including the participation of all relevant interested parties;

(g) Further assistance by the international community to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing the IPF proposals for action as needed. National forest programmes could be used as a framework for channelling development assistance for implementation. Such support is particularly needed for capacity-building, and for creating participatory mechanisms and innovative financing arrangements.

B. Monitoring progress in implementation

Conclusions

10. IFF recognized that there are various aspects to data collection, monitoring, assessment and reporting. One aspect relates to assessing progress in implementation of the IPF proposals for action in terms of existing and, if appropriate, new legislation, policies, programmes and processes. Another aspect relates to assessing trends in the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests as well as the state of forests, and to make the best use of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. IFF also recognized that the national implementation of criteria and indicators and assessing progress is affected by enabling conditions and mechanisms, including financial and technical resources. The primary value and benefits of reviewing, monitoring and reporting is at the national level. Efforts should be made to make national data timely, accurate and internationally comparable, as well as transparent and accessible to all interested parties.

11. The collection, assessment, monitoring, organization, reporting and dissemination of data can involve substantial costs and institutional capacity. Therefore, efforts should be made to avoid duplication by utilizing, where appropriate, existing reporting systems of international organizations and instruments, and by harmonizing, where appropriate, existing monitoring and reporting systems.

12. There is a need to build and strengthen institutional, technical and human capacity at the national level to enable periodic monitoring of the state of forests in order to measure and report on policy effectiveness and progress towards sustainable forest management as well as to identify priority areas of action. Monitoring, assessment and reporting activities should be integrated into national forest programmes. Approaches to strengthening national capacities should be practical and cost-effective.

13. Cooperation, coordination and partnership among countries and between countries and organizations would assist capacity-building. In this regard, greater priority should be given by all countries to financial and technical assistance programmes and the transfer of technology to help developing countries to strengthen their capacity for reviewing, monitoring and reporting.

14. There is also a need to develop a better common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms at both the national and international levels, as well as greater comparability of data that permits aggregation at the regional and global levels. This would assist countries in meeting the various demands for reviewing, monitoring and reporting on forests by international instruments, multilateral organizations and various regional and international criteria and indicator processes.

15. Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management are important tools for reviewing, monitoring and reporting on the state of and trends in all types of forests and for assessing progress towards sustainable forest management. Incorporating the results of criteria and indicators, for instance, in voluntary national reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development, as well as to the FAO global forest resources assessment, national forest programmes reporting, and the *State of the World's Forests* reporting, would provide useful bases to assess progress towards management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

Proposals for action

16. IFF recalled the IPF proposals for action that are relevant to this category (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 17 (g), 17 (i), 70 (e), 77 (f), 78 (b), 78 (c), 115 (a) and 115 (b)).

17. IFF encouraged countries to:

(a) Prepare national information on the management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests as the basis for any consolidated information on forests at the international level. Adequate financial resources, both domestic and international, should be available for capacity-building and implementation of national reporting initiatives;

(b) Make forest-related information for reviewing, monitoring and reporting progress in implementation of sustainable forest management widely available and accessible to policy makers and to interested groups, noting the important role that subnational levels of government and interested groups play in contributing to assessment and information gathering;

(c) Report on the implementation of IPF proposals for action in the context of reporting on forests to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eighth session, taking into account, where appropriate, the process used to assess the relevance of the proposals and priorities for action, the organizations and interested parties involved, and noting progress made and the areas where new actions could be undertaken;

(d) Further develop and implement, with the support of international organizations, as appropriate, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, and use them as a basis for reviewing, monitoring and reporting national trends in the state of forests, as well as progress on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests;

(e) Encourage the donor community to assist developing countries in preparing national information and reports on forests, recognizing that information collection and reporting are costly activities.

18. IFF encouraged ITFF member organizations and other relevant international and regional organizations to consult with countries regarding collection and synthesis of national information in order to facilitate accurate reporting with a view to having countries verify the information synthesized, and give effective feedback on the overall results of data collection and reporting and make such information widely available and accessible to policy makers and to interested groups.

19. IFF encouraged countries, ITFF member organizations and other relevant international and regional organizations to:

(a) Develop harmonized, cost-effective, comprehensive reporting formats for collecting and synthesizing national forest information to meet the diverse demands for reliable and timely data by various forest-related international organizations and instruments. There is a need to incorporate information on relevant criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, including indicators on environmental, social and economic functions, such as non-wood products, forest resources and services, and the competitiveness of forest products at the domestic and international levels, into such reporting formats in order to reduce reporting burdens on countries and increase the timeliness and consistency of reporting;

(b) Improve the effectiveness of coordination and partnership within countries and with international organizations and instruments as a means of building the capacity in developing countries for periodic and timely collection, review, synthesis and utilization of information related to sustainable forest management.

II. Matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests process

A. Need for financial resources

Conclusions

20. IFF reiterated the relevance and validity of the IPF proposals for action on financial assistance. A substantial increase in financing from all sources, including domestic and international, public and private, is required for the effective management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, especially in many developing countries. It is equally important to increase efficiency and effectiveness of available resources and existing mechanisms. Developing countries, including countries with low forest cover and particularly the least developed countries, need special consideration in financial cooperation to meet their needs for forest products and services sustainably and sustainably manage their forests, and in some cases, expand their forest cover.

21. IFF recognized the need for greater investment from all sources to promote sustainable forest management. Mobilizing new and additional financial resources for sustainable forest management requires innovative strategies that address the widely increasing need for public financing for forests as well as the creation of an attractive and adequate policy environment for private investments in sustainable forest management. Achieving the sustainable forest management policy goal requires recognizing the benefits of attaining profitability of sustainable forestry practices while discouraging unsustainable forest exploitation. In the case of domestic public and private sources, a major aim is to increase revenues from

sustainably produced forest products and services, including forest-related biological resources, while encouraging the necessary reinvestment in sustainable forest management.

22. Private-sector investments in sustainable forest management are generally inhibited by factors resulting from policy and market imperfections as well as those related to the specific characteristics of forestry, such as risk and uncertainties associated with long rotation periods and uneven distribution of benefits and costs over time. There is a potential for sustainable forest management to be financially self-sustaining in the long run but bridging financing is often required during the transition period.

23. The roles of public and private sector financing sources are distinct but complementary and they should be jointly considered in financing strategies for sustainable forest management. However, private sector investment should not be considered a substitute for international public funding, including ODA. Both international and domestic public financing have supportive roles to play in the transition process to sustainable forest management. The purpose of public sector financing is, *inter alia*, to promote the enhancement of the environmental, social and economic functions of forests, whereas that of the private sector is often to generate wealth and create markets in a manner that is consistent with national policies and regulations. It is desirable to expand the role of private sector resources in the financing of sustainable forest management. The mobilization of private sector resources often requires policy adjustments in order to create enabling conditions for sustainable forest management such as appropriate legal and institutional frameworks and provision of incentives. In developing countries, the public funding related to forests, both domestic and international, including ODA, is needed for capacity-building, leveraging private-sector funding, and financing environmentally sound development projects and programmes for sustainable forest management according to national priorities.

24. Financial flows into the forest sector should support and be consistent with the development and implementation of national forest programmes and initiatives. In this regard, sustainable forest management should be considered one of the priorities in domestic financial resource allocation as well as in programming ODA available for forest-related activities.

25. The more efficient and effective use of all financial resources is enhanced by transparent and effective administrative and management arrangements, and the involvement and participation of interested parties. Adequate institutional capacity is essential for the better absorption and utilization of existing as well as additional international public funding for sustainable forest management. The provision of domestic and international financial resources to strengthen and reinforce institutional and management capacity in developing countries is therefore necessary.

26. Availability of timely and relevant information on financial flows from all sources and on financial mechanisms is instrumental in helping countries and their cooperation partners take more focused actions to support sustainable forest management. There is therefore a need to develop cost-effective and efficient information systems. Country case studies could be useful to further understand the role of financial flows from different sources and to help ensure effectiveness in achieving sustainable forest management.

27. In the context of current mandates and frameworks of existing international financial institutions and programmes, the proposal for establishing an international financial mechanism to support sustainable forest management was deliberated upon. In this regard, it was proposed that an international fund for forests be established in order to support, *inter alia*, the additional costs during the transition period towards sustainable forest management, and that such an international financial arrangement or mechanism should preferably (a) involve participating donors and beneficiaries in relevant decision-making, (b) respond to national needs and support national forest programmes, (c) facilitate internalizing externalities of forests in promoting sustainable forest management, (d) build on or link with national financing mechanisms, (e) be transparent and administratively efficient, (f) complement the financing mechanisms of relevant multilateral agreements, and (g) have secure and sustained funding sources. However, reservations were also voiced regarding the establishment of an international fund for forests.

28. The concept of an international investment promotion entity to mobilize private sector investment in sustainable forest management deserves further consideration. Any such entity need not require the creation of a new organization and could be integrated within existing institutions. Such an investment promotion entity could catalyse and support activities related to information, capacity-building, technology transfer, and finance between the public and private sectors to facilitate investment in sustainable forest management. International financial and investment promotion mechanisms for sustainable forest management, though independent, could be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

29. IFF recognized that developed countries should fulfil the commitments they have undertaken to reach the accepted United Nations target of allocating 0.7 per cent of gross national product to ODA as soon as possible.

Proposals for action

30. IFF recalled the IPF proposals for action relevant to this programme element (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 67-71) and called upon countries and relevant international organizations to:

(a) Increase financial resources and make or intensify efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of available resources for sustainable forest management, and use national forest programmes or other integrated programmes as the basis for channelling, prioritizing and increasing financial assistance to the forest sector in developing countries;

(b) Give special consideration to developing countries, including countries with low forest cover and particularly the least developed countries, in financial cooperation to meet their needs for forest products and services sustainably and sustainably manage their forests, and in some cases expand their forest cover;

(c) Encourage private investments in sustainable forest management by providing a stable and transparent investment environment within an adequate regulatory framework that also encourages the reinvestment of forest revenues into sustainable forest management;

(d) Undertake activities for systematic collection and analysis of financial flows data in the forest sector in order to enable informed and rational policy decisions based on reliable information;

(e) Explore the feasibility of operationalizing an investment promotion entity taking into account the functions and circumstances under which such an entity would operate as well as its scope in relation to the existing financial mechanisms.

31. The Forum discussed but was not able to reach consensus on the following proposals for action:

(a) Continue further exploration, identification, and development of new and improved and more effective financial mechanisms, and further explore the potential and results of innovative use of existing mechanisms to promote sustainable forest management, taking into account the full range of goods and services, including forest related biological resources, and sharing experience and information on such mechanisms;

(b) Create an international forest fund to support, *inter alia*, the additional costs during the transition period towards sustainable forest management;

(c) Make full use of the potential of existing mechanisms, such as GEF, consistent with their mandates, and explore options to expand their scope/and review their scope for financing a wider range of sustainable forest management activities;

(d) Consider the need for preparing a study integrating such issues as the valuation of forest goods and services, including biological resources, and the international trade of forest goods, taking due account of the effects of international restrictions, such as tariff escalations, and other protective measures.

B. Trade and environment

Conclusions

32. Mutually supportive trade and environment policies can effectively promote the achievement of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Given that trade and environment policies have their specific objectives, decision makers, including trade partners, should contribute to achieving trade in wood and non-wood forest products and services from sustainably managed forests, and implement policies and actions, in particular, avoiding policies that have adverse effects, either on trade or on the sustainable management of all types of forests. It is important to take into account the needs of developing countries for social and economic development and environmental protection, in particular poverty alleviation.

33. The impact that international trade in wood and non-wood forest products has on sustainable forest management can be both positive and negative. Trade liberalization adds value to the resource and has the potential to promote economic development, contribute to poverty alleviation and reduce environmental degradation, provided it is accompanied by sound environmental and social policies. However, trade liberalization must not be a vehicle for undermining domestic environmental and health standards which are consistent with international trade rules. Countries should study the positive and negative impacts of trade policies on sustainable forest management. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations yielded significant reductions to tariffs affecting forest products. Special attention should be given to remaining and emerging trade restrictions which constrain market access, particularly for value-added products. Trade measures

intended to promote sustainable forest management should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade.

34. IFF recognized the potential role of voluntary certification of forest management and labelling of forest products as among the potential tools in promoting sustainable forest management and differentiating forest products and services in the market. However, more practical experience is necessary to reach conclusions on the effectiveness of such programmes. Moreover, unsuitable design or non-transparent application of such schemes may in some cases lead to unjustified obstacles to market access. In particular, small and medium-sized forest owners and enterprises, including those of developing countries, may find it excessively costly to implement certification and/or labelling schemes. In the context of these issues, IFF took note of the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) with regard to voluntary eco-labelling schemes. The proliferation of certification and/or labelling schemes calls for further cooperative work, in line with IPF recommendations, towards achieving their international comparability and considering their equivalency while taking into account the diversity of national and regional situations.

35. Forest products and services and their substitutes should be adequately valued through full-cost internalization, which in turn would influence competitiveness of these products and services. In this context, countries should undertake analyses of the implications of such valuation on forest management and economic development. Countries should also implement full-cost internalization strategies for forest products and services and their substitutes, taking into consideration the potential costs and benefits of improved efficiency and sustainability of the forest sector.

36. Some available studies carried out on the relative full life-cycle analysis of the environmental impacts of forest products, and their substitutes suggest that the former may be preferable, but further work on such life-cycle analysis is needed.

37. The nature and extent of illegal trade in wood and non-wood forest products, including forest related biological resources, is a serious concern due to damage to ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, lost revenue by Governments, forest owners and local and/or indigenous communities, and distortion of markets for forest products and services. National policies and international cooperation are important to reduce illegal trade with the aim towards its elimination.

38. Recent changes in the markets for forest products, such as those caused by the recent financial crisis, have raised concerns on the ability to continue the implementation of measures aimed at sustainable forest management but have at the same time increased the need for it. The long-term impacts of such unpredictable events on efforts to promote sustainable forest management need examination and monitoring. Such situations highlight the need to develop strategies for sustainable forest management with a long-term perspective so that the negative effects of short-term market changes can be minimized.

39. Developing countries with low forest cover and small island countries have special problems in developing their forest sectors to meet local needs for forest products and services. They depend, in many areas, on other countries to satisfy their needs for forest goods and services. Trade is essential to meet such needs, and

international economic and trade policies may have serious impacts on the efforts of these countries to expand and rehabilitate their forest cover.

40. Increased market transparency is essential in order to improve the market access for forest products and services, including those coming from sustainably managed forests.[e] In this regard, the role of the private sector is vital but action is also needed by all interested parties to improve market transparency. A better understanding by both producers and consumers of the potential relationship between trade in forest products, forest services and their substitutes and sustainable forest management could help to promote responsible choices in the supply and demand for forest products, forest services and their substitutes.

Proposals for action

41. IFF stressed the importance of implementing the IPF proposals for action on trade and environment. In order to further their effective implementation IFF:

(a) Urged countries, including trade partners, to contribute to achieving trade in wood and non-wood products and services from sustainably managed forests, and implement policies and actions, in particular avoiding policies that have adverse effects, either on trade or on sustainable forest management;

(b) Urged countries, international organizations, including WTO,[f] and other interested parties to undertake, as appropriate, further cooperative work on voluntary certification and/or labelling schemes, in line with the recommendations of IPF, while seeking to enhance their international comparability and considering their equivalence, taking into account the diversity of national and regional situations, and to ensure adequate transparency and non-discrimination in the design and operation of such schemes, and are consistent with international obligations so as to promote sustainable forest management and not to lead to unjustifiable obstacles to market access;

(c) Urged countries to undertake analyses of the implications of full-cost internalization on forest management and economic development and implement full-cost internalization strategies for forest products and services and their substitutes;

(d) Requested countries, international organizations and other interested parties to undertake further work on full life-cycle analysis of the environmental impacts of forest products and their substitutes;

(e) Called upon all interested parties to take action to improve market transparency, taking into account the role of the private sector, to help promote responsible producer and consumer choices in the supply and demand for forest products, forest services and their substitutes;

(f) Called upon countries to consider appropriate national-level actions and promote international cooperation to reduce the illegal trade in wood and non-wood forest products including forest related biological resources, with the aim of its elimination;

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[e] The Forum discussed but could not reach consensus on the specific reference to "including those coming from sustainably managed forests".

[f] The Forum discussed, but could not reach consensus to the specific reference to WTO in this context.

(g) Urged countries to develop strategies for sustainable forest management with a long-term perspective so that the negative effects of short-term market changes, such as the recent regional financial crises, can be minimized;

(h) Urged countries to recognize the special importance of imports of forest products for countries with low forest cover and fragile forest ecosystems, and small island developing States to satisfy their needs for forest products and services to assist them in expanding and rehabilitating their forest cover.

42. The Forum discussed but was not able to reach consensus on the following proposal for action:

"Supported continued efforts by countries and the World Trade Organization towards trade liberalization giving special attention to removing remaining and emerging trade restrictions which constrain market access, particularly for value added forest products;".

C. Transfer of environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management

Conclusions

43. IFF reiterated the importance of the Forest Principles, chapter 34 of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex) and decision 6/3 adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session, to the transfer of environmentally sound technologies in support of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. IFF emphasized the strong links among sustainable forest management and transfer of technologies, capacity-building and institution-building, investment and financing from both public and private sources.

44. Although not every constraint to sustainable forest management can be alleviated by the transfer of technology, IFF emphasized that improved access to and utilization of environmentally sound technologies have great potential for enhancing sustainable forest management. Indeed, policy environments and measures favourable to sustainable forest management and investment are as important as the availability and appropriate application of the technologies themselves.

45. Efforts to enhance technology cooperation through the development, transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies should recognize the important but differentiated contributions of the public and private sectors, while stressing the governmental role in developing and fostering an enabling policy, legal and institutional framework.

46. National forest programmes, as described in the report of IPF on its fourth session (see E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 17 (a)), should facilitate development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies in support of sustainable forest management and forest products processing. There is a need to further the participation of interested parties in forest-related technology development and to facilitate efficient adaptation and use of technologies and know-how, in accordance with national legislation, through partnerships among the public and private sectors, including research centres, universities and companies, and indigenous people, local communities and non-governmental organizations.

47. There is a wide range of available environmentally sound technologies, particularly in developed countries, that can support sustainable forest management. The policies, actions and types of financing that are needed for efficient selection, transfer, adaptation and use of these technologies vary, depending on the type of technology, local conditions and intended use. They should be demand-driven and consistent with national priorities for sustainable forest management, as expressed in management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and, where appropriate, should be reflected in national forest programmes. IFF stressed that the international community should promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and the corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries for the implementation of Agenda 21.

48. Efforts for the comprehensive assessment of technology needs and suitability have been insufficient so far. Many countries, in particular developing countries, need to strengthen their capacities for assessment of the environmental soundness, economic sustainability and social impacts of technologies.

49. Developing low forest cover countries have technological needs related to, in particular, afforestation for land rehabilitation, reforestation and restoration of degraded forests and for sustainable management of existing, often unique, forests.

50. Opportunities do exist to finance and support North-South technology transfer through ODA. Further opportunities also exist to finance and support North-South cooperation in technology transfer through public and private partnerships, joint ventures and foreign direct investments. There is also an important role for international organizations in the dissemination and facilitation of transfer of existing knowledge. Efficient and effective private-sector involvement in North-South technology transfer depends on mutual interests and an appropriate enabling environment, including promoting policy instruments aimed at creating a favourable environment to attract foreign private investment. International and regional organizations have an important role to play in the field of forest-related technology transfer. Regional networks could contribute to a more effective and efficient use of already existing technologies.

51. South-South cooperation is complementary to North-South transfer of technology and know-how. There is potential for further strengthening of South-South transfer of technology and know-how. Technologies generated in the South may be more accessible, more applicable and less costly and have greater potential for diffusion than some technologies developed in the North. Environmentally sound indigenous technologies, including traditional forest-related knowledge, should be given special attention, as appropriate, and transfer of such technologies or know-how must be carried out with the consent of the holder and according to national legislation.

52. IFF recognized the importance of technologies related to biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) of forests. In this respect, cooperation between developed and developing countries should be strengthened on transferring and, as required, developing technologies for the sustainable use of biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) of forests, as they relate to the management, conservation and sustainable development

of all types of forests consistent with and building on progress under the Convention on Biological Diversity and without prejudice to the commitments undertaken by parties to the Convention within its scope.

53. To date, relatively little attention has been given to the need for increased technology and know-how diffusion to end-users through forest extension services. Some countries have, to that end, effective mechanisms and/or extension programmes, which have a significant potential to be emulated by a broader set of countries.

54. There is an urgent need for implementation of modern, appropriate environmentally sound wood energy technologies, which would enable more efficient use of waste and by-products created by forest logging and wood processing, as well as wood harvested for fuelwood, for both industrial and household uses.

55. Focused attention should be given to gender mainstreaming related to capacity-building and technology transfer, particularly in the context of wood energy use, tree cultivation for household energy use, sustainable forest management and tenure, and ownership of forests and lands designated for afforestation. Appropriate technologies for the use of wood as an energy source at the rural household level have a great potential to enhance the health and socio-economic status of women in many developing countries.

Proposals for action

56. IFF stressed the importance of implementing the IPF proposals for action on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies. In order to further their effective implementation, IFF:

(a) Urged countries, consistent with decision 6/3 of the Commission on Sustainable Development as well as paragraph 77 of the IPF proposals for action (E/CN.17/1997/12), to initiate actions towards the broadening and development of mechanisms and/or further initiatives to enhance the transfer of technology from developed countries to developing countries to promote sustainable forest management;

(b) Urged all countries to develop an enabling policy, legal and institutional framework that encourages appropriate public and private sector investments in environmentally sound technologies for sustainable forest management in line with the respective national forest programmes, where applicable;

(c) Urged countries and relevant international organizations to support the strengthening of cooperation between institutions to facilitate the assessment of needs for adaptation and transfer of forest-related environmentally sound technologies through North-South and South-South cooperation. Those institutions recognized as centres of excellence should act as clearing houses, in line with Agenda 21, chapter 34, in order to expedite the flow of these technologies;

(d) Urged all countries to recognize the importance of the transfer of technologies to developing countries and economies in transition, including human and institutional capacity-building, as an integral part of the process of investment and sustainable development; and the importance of combining technology transfer

with training, education and institutional strengthening in order to promote effective use and broad dissemination of environmentally sound technologies;

(e) Urged all countries, in particular developed countries, to take further concrete measures to promote and facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights in accordance with the relevant international and domestic laws, in order to put into further practice the recommendations of Agenda 21, the Commission on Sustainable Development and IPF, and in this context to mobilize further support for the development and application of appropriate technologies and corresponding know-how within these countries to enhance their capacities to implement sustainable forest management;

(f) Urged countries and relevant international organizations to consider practical measures to promote the diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to end-users, particularly in local communities in developing countries, through the efficient use of extension services;

(g) Urged countries and relevant international organizations to enhance partnerships, and to initiate, as appropriate, coordinate and cooperate in forest-related technical and financial assistance and capacity-building in respect of the transfer, development and application of environmentally sound technologies;

(h) Encouraged countries, with the cooperation of international organizations, to promote appropriate transfer of environmentally sound rehabilitation technologies for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in environmentally critical areas, and to develop appropriate means to promote sharing of environmentally sound technologies between and within countries, including effective links between research, extension and implementation;

(i) Underscored the importance of assisting developing countries with low forest cover and those with fragile forest ecosystems in their efforts in respect of capacity-building that would facilitate the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to address those needs;

(j) Urged countries to promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) and the results and applications of research, upon mutually agreed terms, and to work, as necessary, on addressing issues of the identification of origins of forest genetic resources within their intellectual property rights, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, as appropriate, taking into account the work being advanced by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international agreements, in accordance with national laws;

(k) The Forum also discussed but could not conclude the debate or reach consensus on the proposal to encourage countries to develop appropriate mechanisms and/or measures to enable indigenous people, local communities and forest-dependent groups to realize the potential benefits of traditional forest-related knowledge in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity, through the establishment and enforcement of intellectual property rights linked to this knowledge, including the giving of due recognition to the use of traditional forest-related knowledge in patent applications for technologies;

(l) Urged all countries, in particular developed countries, to pursue actions that would facilitate the transfer, development and application of environmentally sound technologies for and analyse the implications of the use of wood and non-wood by-products created by forest harvesting and wood processing for industrial and domestic purposes, giving special attention to wood-waste materials as an energy source;

(m) Called upon countries to undertake steps to ensure equal opportunities for women, in particular indigenous women and women in rural areas, to become beneficiaries of environmentally sound forest-related technologies, know-how and extension services;

(n) Urged countries to strengthen outreach programmes targeted at women in the areas of education, training and microcredit, related to community development programmes and household use of wood, wood lots for fuelwood and energy-efficient cooking technology;

(o) Urged countries and relevant international organizations to use data and information that are disaggregated by gender in sectoral surveys and studies used in the development of technologies for sustainable forest management policies and projects.

D. Issues that need further clarification

1. Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation

Conclusions

57. IFF reiterated the need for the implementation of the proposals for action on this programme element adopted by IPF, and noted their continuing relevance and validity. In this context, it noted the recommendations of the global workshop held in Costa Rica in January 1999.

58. To overcome major obstacles when addressing the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, IFF stressed the importance of policy consistency inside and outside the forest sector. Furthermore, it emphasized the need for effective policy coordination for addressing underlying causes of deforestation, which are often interrelated and social and economic in character, and include poverty; lack of secure land tenure patterns; inadequate recognition of the rights and needs of forest-dependent indigenous and local communities within national laws and jurisdiction; inadequate cross-sectoral policies; undervaluation of forest products and services; lack of participation; lack of good governance; absence of a supportive economic climate that supports sustainable forest management; illegal trade; lack of capacity; lack of enabling environment, at both the national and international levels; and national policies that distort market and encourage forest lands conversion to other uses, including in low forest cover lands. It was further noted that the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation as well as the approaches to deal with them are often country specific and therefore vary among countries.

59. IFF continued to recognize the need for analysis at the national and international levels of the sequence of causes contributing to changes in the quantity

and quality of forests, in particular by using the diagnostic framework referred to in the report of IPF on its fourth session (see E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 31).

60. IFF, while recognizing the important role of Governments in establishing national policies in their respective countries towards attaining sustainable forest management, stressed that the private sector, both in developing and developed countries, also has an important role to play in forest policy development and implementation. Combating deforestation requires the involvement of many actors, including national and subnational Governments, civil society, forest owners, international organizations, the private sector, research organizations, and international and bilateral aid agencies. Broad participation of indigenous and local communities (including indigenous people and other forest-dependent people practising traditional lifestyles, forest owners and local communities, many of whom possess important traditional forest-related knowledge; see General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 37) and women in forest-related processes is needed. All actors need to work together to initiate processes, both at the national and international levels, to address effectively underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

61. A major challenge which now lies ahead concerning deforestation is the implementation of the IPF proposals for action. For developing countries, this involves responding to political, financial and technical needs and priority to national forest policies and programmes; for country donors and international organizations, it involves more focused cooperation and coordination in support of their efforts on agreed priority areas for action.

62. The valuation of all goods and services, including biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) provided by forests, is needed to realize its importance compared with other land uses. Inadequate valuation of natural forests is an important underlying cause of deforestation. The non-valuation of non-marketable environmental and social services of forests is a market failure, and inappropriate subsidies that encourage conversion of forested lands should be discouraged. Deforestation is closely related with the lack of economic and financial competitiveness of sustainable forest management compared with other alternative uses of the land. Current economic valuation of forest resources has often resulted in inadequate incentives for sustainable resource use, which in turn induce environmental degradation. The pricing of forest goods and services as well as their substitutes should include environmental and social costs and benefits. In relation to this, the Forum underlines the importance of its work on valuation (see programme element II.d (v)) and economic instruments (see programme element II.d (vi)).

Proposals for action

63. IFF recalls the following IPF proposals for action relevant to this programme element (see E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 17 (e), 17 (f), 27 to 31, 67 (g), 70 (c) and 77 (f)).

64. IFF stressed the importance of implementing the IPF proposals for action on underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, with particular emphasis on the needs and requirements of low forest cover countries and countries with fragile forest ecosystems. In order to further their effective implementation, IFF encouraged countries, with the assistance of international organizations, donor countries and financial institutions, to implement the following additional proposals

through partnerships involving, where appropriate, the participation of government institutions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, indigenous and local communities, forest owners and the private sector:

(a) Further study and take practical measures to address the chains of causality of the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation within each country, including the impact of poverty and the impact of processes outside the forest sector;

(b) Create appropriate procedures in order to promote effective participation of all interested parties in decision-making about forest management;

(c) Support appropriate land tenure law and/or arrangements as a means to define clearly land ownership, as well as the rights of indigenous and local communities and forest owners, for the sustainable use of forest resources, taking into account the sovereign right of each country and its legal framework;

(d) Develop mechanisms, as appropriate, to improve land access and use of forest resources on a sustainable basis;

(e) Support capacity-building in communities, in particular for those with responsibilities in forest management, including in low forest cover countries, and create awareness in the society at large on the importance of issues related to deforestation and forest degradation;

(f) Support and promote community involvement in sustainable forest management through technical guidance, economic incentives and, where appropriate, legal frameworks;

(g) Promote maintenance and enhancement of forest resources through sustainable forest management practices, and promote the creation of new forest resources through the establishment of planted forests and other means, such as rehabilitation of degraded forests, taking into consideration their social, cultural and environmental impacts, and economic costs and benefits;

(h) Identify and measure internalization of externalities, and introduce positive incentives in both the forest and non-forest sectors that may help combat deforestation and forest degradation;

(i) Support local community programmes for capacity-building and credit facilities, and facilitate access to domestic and external markets of forest products and services;

(j) Request international financial institutions to analyse the impacts of foreign debt on deforestation and forest degradation, and request international financial institutions to explore, in cooperation with donor and recipient countries, innovative financial approaches and schemes for helping countries to promote sustainable forest management.

65. IFF invited international financial institutions to strengthen transparency in decision-making as it affects sustainable forest management, and to ensure that their policies support sustainable forest management.

66. IFF also invited countries to use national forest programmes, as appropriate, or other relevant programmes to involve indigenous and local communities and women to participate in the formulation and implementation of measures that aim to protect

their rights and privileges in relation to forest lands, traditional forest-related knowledge and forest biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity).

67. IFF encouraged ITFF member organizations to support the elaboration of a comprehensive study of land tenure issues related to deforestation and forest degradation.

2. Traditional forest-related knowledge

Conclusions

68. The involvement of indigenous people and local communities (including indigenous people and other forest-dependent people practising traditional lifestyles, forest owners and local communities, many of whom possess important traditional forest-related knowledge; see General Assembly resolution A/S-19/2, annex, para. 37) and the understanding and use of their traditional knowledge, as well as recognition of their rights to the natural resources in their traditional areas within national laws and jurisdiction, can support the formulation, design, implementation and monitoring of policies towards sustainable forest management. The sharing and application of this knowledge can help interested parties to avoid procedures that impact unfavourably on ecosystems and local social systems. Traditional knowledge can complement new technologies, and might be adapted and used more widely. In this context, IFF recalled relevant IPF proposals for action (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 40 (r)).

69. IFF recognized the need to further explore the modalities for promoting greater recognition, respect and protection of traditional forest-related knowledge involved in sustainable forest management. Further understanding of the role of traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management can be achieved by identifying traditional systems that promote management, conservation and sustainable use of forest resources, in accordance with article 8 (j) and other provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity and proposals for action derived from the IPF/IFF process.

70. Several processes relevant to the application and development of legal and other forms of protection of traditional forest-related knowledge are being addressed through different international organizations and instruments. There should be a close cooperation and coordination between the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action. While recognizing the importance of the work of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Convention and of effective protection mechanisms for traditional knowledge systems and practices, and recalling the proposed memorandum of understanding between WIPO and the Convention, IFF stressed the importance of ongoing work to develop a common appreciation and understanding of the relationship between the intellectual property rights, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

71. In keeping with Agenda 21, chapter 26, and also noting the relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) convention, IFF recognized the critical importance of the rights of indigenous and local communities to participate in the conservation and management of all types of forests and forest biological resources.

72. IFF noted and welcomed the establishment of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on article 8 (j) and related provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in which indigenous and local communities are participating.

Proposals for action

73. IFF recalled IPF proposals for action relevant to this programme element (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 40 (a) to 40 (r) and 132 (c)).

74. IFF called upon countries to:

(a) Implement effective measures to recognize, respect, protect and maintain traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management, including forest biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) within their intellectual property rights, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, as appropriate, taking into account the relevant work being advanced by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international agreements;

(b) Promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits, including consideration of payments, where appropriate, arising from the use of such knowledge, innovations and practices, in accordance with, *inter alia*, article 8 (j) and related provisions of articles 15, 16 and 19 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international agreements and taking into account national law, with the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices;

(c) Work with relevant international organizations to help to develop a common appreciation and understanding of the relationship between the intellectual property rights, *sui generis* or other relevant systems for protection, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, including work, as necessary, on addressing issues related to the identification of origins of traditional forest-related knowledge, and of the knowledge that results from the use of forest genetic resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity), with a view to protecting such knowledge from inappropriate use;

(d) Develop or strengthen, as appropriate, and implement, at the national level, legislation and policies to achieve objectives under article 8 (j) and related provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and support efforts by relevant international organizations and institutions regarding the protection and application of traditional forest-related knowledge, which can include the development of guidelines, in accordance with their mandates.

75. IFF invited the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the participation of indigenous people and local communities, through the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group, in its programme of work, under the related provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, to include options for collecting, recording, applying and locating traditional forest-related knowledge, recognizing the need to foster the wider application of such knowledge, innovations and practices, with the approval and effective involvement of the holders throughout the process.

3. Forest conservation and protected areas

Conclusions

76. IFF noted the outcome of the in-depth study on the theme "International forest conservation: protected areas and beyond", sponsored by the Government of Australia, and the recommendations of the international expert meeting on protected forest areas sponsored by the Governments of the United States of America and Brazil.

77. The Forum recognized the importance of an ecosystem approach which underlines forest conservation and protection as an integral component of sustainable forest management. The establishment and management of protected forest areas within an ecosystem approach can contribute significantly to local economies and non-market benefits to society in the form of flood control, soil and watershed protection, and other ecological services essential to human well-being.

78. The Forum acknowledged that existing protected areas are important in protecting a number of forest values and represent considerable effort and achievement on the part of all concerned in their establishment and management. However, it was noted that fragmentation of forest land may be a constraint to the effective protection of biodiversity and ecological functions of forest areas. In a number of countries, existing protected areas are not, in themselves, sufficient to maintain forest conservation objectives. Forest conservation cannot be based solely on a rigid demarcation between protected areas and all other forms of land use, in particular commercial forest use. Where possible, protected areas should form part of a landscape continuum, where the conservation of biological diversity, environmental services and other values are also accorded priority in the wider context of other forest management and land-use practices in surrounding areas.

79. Most countries have adopted legislation, policies and strategies towards landscape management, biological diversity, forest conservation and protected areas. However, implementation and enforcement of these policies and laws in many countries is inadequate. Insufficient coordination of conflicting policies and practices, inappropriate implementation strategies and lack of political will and financial and human resources are widely recognized as the major reasons for the failure to achieve forest conservation goals in some countries. The effectiveness of the management of protected areas can be assessed in terms of security of status through the implementation of appropriate legislation, the effectiveness of protection of biodiversity and ecological values, institutional capacity, positive social impacts and the level of support from indigenous and local communities (including indigenous people and other forest-dependent people practising traditional lifestyles, forest owners and local communities, many of whom possess important traditional forest-related knowledge; see General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 37), and adequate financial support at both the national and international levels.

80. There are several existing categories of protected areas. The one developed by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas is being used by many countries, United Nations institutions and major groups. IUCN is currently working with other organizations and countries to interpret the categories for use in national and international statistics. The categories need to be more flexible in order to encompass the wide range of forest protection regimes

existing in various countries. There is also a need to develop common understanding on the key concepts, definitions and terminology concerning management regimes consistent with forest conservation inside and outside protected areas. In establishing and managing protected forest areas and identifying them with appropriate categories, consideration should be given to their value as representative of unique forest types, their potential to generate information on ecological processes, conservation of biodiversity and environmental services, and their impact on the indigenous and local communities and others depending on them for sustenance.

81. The forest sector is affected by policies that concern both public- and private-sector activities and by activities in other sectors. Many non-forest-sector policies, such as those related to regional development, resettlement, trade, structural adjustment and agriculture, may have intended or unintended profound perverse impacts on forest conservation goals. The success of efforts to achieve forest conservation will be enhanced with effective cross-sectoral linkages and coordination.

82. A greater awareness of the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits, especially biological resources, of forest conservation and protected forest areas can help to generate public support and resources for forest conservation. Many civil society actors have an interest in forest conservation. The convergence of interests of indigenous and local communities and of protected forest areas needs to be further explored and identified so as to allow the effective participation of all interested parties. A variety of partnerships and international cooperation schemes, operating at different geographical scales at national and international levels and with different objectives, may be useful to the support of forest conservation and protected areas.

Proposals for action

83. The Forum recalled the proposals made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests for action relevant to this programme element (see, in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 17 (f), 17 (i), 58 (b) (v), 67 (f) and 77 (f)).

84. The Forum invited countries to implement, with the assistance of international organizations, donor countries and financial institutions, the proposals for action of this new programme element through partnership mechanisms involving, where appropriate, the participation of governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and indigenous and local communities.

85. The Forum encouraged countries to:

(a) Commit themselves to the protection, conservation and representativeness of all types of forests, consistent with national forest policies and programmes that recognize the linkage between forest conservation and sustainable development. This commitment may be achieved through a range of conservation mechanisms, reflecting varying national circumstances, applied within and outside of protected forest areas, and the complementary roles of protected forest areas and other sustainable forest management activities — for example, the production of wood and non-wood products and services, where forest conservation is promoted by other means;

(b) Develop and implement appropriate strategies for the protection of the full range of forest values, including cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic aspects; recognition of the multiple functions and sustainable use of all types of forests, with particular regard to biological diversity; participation of communities and other interested parties; integration of the livelihood needs of indigenous and local communities; and planning and management on an ecosystem basis, in which special emphasis should be put on the continued integrity of genetic diversity;

(c) Develop and implement forest management mechanisms, as appropriate, that provide for partnerships and the participation of forest owners and of indigenous and local communities in support of forest conservation initiatives for sustainable forest management within the legal framework of each country;

(d) Develop financial support mechanisms to engage all interested parties, in particular forest owners and the private sector, in the planning and management of protected forest areas; and recognize protected forest areas under the stewardship of private forest owners or indigenous and local communities;

(e) Develop and apply consistently, as needed, criteria based on the adequacy, consistency and effectiveness of protected areas, following an ecosystem approach and incorporating reserve design principles that identify the need for new protected areas critical to the protection and maintenance of environmental services. In this regard, consideration should be given to linking protected areas, where possible, with corridors and buffer zones in order to form networks;

(f) Develop and implement a range of innovative mechanisms for financing and encouraging forest conservation, including economic incentives, voluntary guidelines, forest regulations, private contracts, taxes and charges, reinvestment of returns from protected areas, forest-related industries, and environmental services in forest conservation; tax deductions for private forest conservation; direct charges for protected area use; and possible returns from carbon sequestration, in accordance with, and within the context of the implementation of relevant articles of the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(g) Contribute to a global and regional assessment of the current status of protected forest areas, including total number, extent of each area, objectives of establishment, effectiveness of management, IUCN-system equivalent category, and basic biological and social information available. This can assist in the establishment of bio-geographically balanced networks of protected forest areas.

86. The Forum encouraged countries that share ecologically important or unique transboundary forests to establish joint protected forest areas, including ecological corridors of regional and/or global significance, and establish agreed guidelines concerning their collaborative management.

87. The Forum called upon countries, international financial institutions and other donors to provide financial support and other resources to activities in developing countries related to forest conservation and to the implementation and management of protected areas in the surrounding landscape, in accordance with national action plans, where such plans exist, through, *inter alia*, institutional strengthening and capacity-building; research and education and public awareness; promotion of access, development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies; and technical and scientific cooperation.

88. The Forum encouraged countries, relevant international organizations and institutions to cooperate in developing methodologies for assessing the conditions and management effectiveness in existing protected forest areas and the surrounding landscape and in protected forest area networks, taking into account the various efforts under way in several countries to build further capacity to collect, organize, utilize and share information and experience, including indigenous and local knowledge, in order to create and manage protected forest areas.

89. The Forum invited countries, relevant international organizations and institutions to work collectively to develop further guidelines for consistency in the interpretation and use of existing IUCN categories of protected areas for application in a national context, and to develop a global approach for assessing the effectiveness of protected forest area management in relation to environmental, social, cultural and other relevant objectives.

90. The Forum urged countries, international financial institutions and other donors to improve coordination, at both the national and international levels, of policies and programmes that affect forest conservation and to address cross-sectoral policies, structural adjustment packages and perverse incentives.

4. Forest research

Conclusions

91. IFF noted the outcome of the international consultation on research and information systems for forests sponsored by Austria and Indonesia, stressed the importance of strengthening research to inform policy, solve practical national and forest-related environmental and social problems, and meet national priorities. It recognized the value of research and information systems in enabling those responsible for forest management and civil society to achieve improved forest outcomes. However, priority setting should be improved. The value of inter-country research collaboration at the eco-regional level was emphasized. Forest-related research agendas should not be limited to forest sector issues but should include other policy issues as well. Inputs from the public and private sectors should be encouraged.

92. There are some inadequacies in existing systems for mobilizing resources, setting priorities and achieving coherence for forest research. Improved mechanisms are needed for research to play its full role in support of sustainable forest management and the maintenance of forests and wooded lands to meet all current and future human needs. Research agenda should be more relevant to policy makers and potential beneficiaries of research. The importance of engaging major groups in identifying priorities and using results was also stressed. It was emphasized that member organizations of ITFF working with the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) should continue to explore ways of generating resources, improving priority setting and increasing the coherence of national, regional and international research efforts.

93. IFF, taking note of proposals for the development of a global forest information service, suggested that use should be made of existing institutions, mechanisms and networks, to enhance access to forest-related information. The need to provide access for all interested parties was noted. It was recognized that individual countries and regional and subregional organizations would contribute to

such an effort, both through relevant international institutions and through the national research information systems. The role of networks in providing valuable opportunities for collaboration by research institutions, within and between countries, as well as the potential for such networks to facilitate capacity development in developing countries, was also noted. The strengthening of linkage with other scientific-oriented international bodies to avoid duplication of efforts and forge synergies of global efforts was emphasized.

94. IFF noted that assistance allocated to building national research capacity is an effective form of development assistance. In this regard, greater priority should be given by all countries to financial and technical assistance programmes and technological cooperation to strengthen the capacity of developing countries. IFF strongly encouraged countries to continue giving higher priority to the forest sector, including through allocation of resources to national research capacity-building.

Proposals for action

95. IFF recalled IPF proposals for action 94 (a), 94 (c) and 94 (d), and underlined that forest research should have a country-driven approach.

96. IFF called upon countries to:

(a) Improve national efforts to strengthen forest research by formulating policies, programmes and strategies, as appropriate, within the context of national forest programmes in order to identify research needs and priorities as well as to coordinate the implementation of research programmes relevant to sustainable forest management;

(b) Consider examination of new ways of mobilizing funding for forest research, including changes to the charters of research institutions that would allow them to address diverse sources of funding, as well as changes to research agendas;

(c) Improve linkage between forest science and forest policy processes at the national and subnational levels by creating opportunities for policy makers, scientists, donors, and other interested parties to provide guidance to research and forest policy discussions;

(d) Ensure that forest research in countries be undertaken with prior consent of the country/countries concerned.

97. IFF urged international organizations, donor countries and financial institutions to:

(a) Contribute to fund forest research in developing countries;

(b) Examine new ways for mobilizing funding for forest research and intensify efforts, including development assistance, to strengthen research networks and build capacity at the national, regional and global levels, to facilitate all countries to meet the broad economic, social, cultural and environmental demands upon forests;

(c) Enhance access to forest-related information by all interested parties, making best use of existing institutions, mechanisms and networks, including national, regional and international research information systems;

(d) Foster joint ventures in forest research involving both the public (research institutions) and private sector.

98. IFF requested ITFF member organizations to:

(a) Explore ways and means of improving priority setting and support for national, regional and international forest-related research efforts;

(b) Explore options for providing guidance to forest science initiatives, strengthening linkages between science and policy, mobilizing resources, including financial resources, and increasing international efforts in support of forest research and research capacity-building;

(c) Work with IUFRO in exploring possibilities for a global forest information service.

5. Valuation of forest goods and services

Conclusions

99. In all countries, forests provide a wide variety of goods and services, including the basis for subsistence livelihood, in particular in many developing countries. Forest valuation should reflect the social, cultural, economic and ecological context and consider values that are important to local and/or indigenous communities, private forest owners, gender aspects, and distributional impacts. In addition, many benefits, such as watershed and soil protection, the mitigation of natural disasters and the enhancement of recreation and tourism are important to society as a whole. At the global level, benefits include carbon sequestration, the conservation of biological diversity and combating desertification.

100. The Forum noted that the development of forest valuation tools and methods is an ongoing process. It reiterated the proposals for action on the valuation of forest goods and services of IPF, and noted their continuing relevance and validity.

101. The Forum stressed that the deficiencies in valuation in economic terms of, for example, social and ecological values, does not imply that these values are considered less relevant. More quantitative data, including resource prices and data for non-economic values of forests, will make forest valuation more effective. There is also a need for simplified, rapid and cost-effective valuation methodologies to suit specific circumstances of countries.

102. The Forum noted that forest valuation can be one of the necessary tools for promoting sustainable forest management, and valuation estimates provide important inputs to forest policy development and to the formulation and implementation of national forest programmes. The Forum noted, however, that sound forest policy decisions can often be made without explicit forest valuation. Forest valuation by itself does not provide a guarantee for appropriate policy decisions.

103. The scope of valuation of forest goods and services needs to extend beyond the limits of the forest sector and include, for example, consideration of alternative land-use options of significant social or economic value, forest products pricing, and ecological impact of substitute materials. There is a need to develop an approach to identify both costs and benefits of sustainable forest management, as well as ways to encourage countries to internalize externalities.

104. Enhanced international cooperation is required, with special attention to capacity-building for the development and application of forest valuation in order to enable informed policies and decision-making, as well as enhanced programme formulation in developing countries.

105. There is a need for enhanced cooperation and coordination on forest valuation matters with other forums dealing with such issues as climate change, international trade, desertification and biological diversity.

Proposals for action

106. The Forum recalled the IPF proposals for action relevant to this programme element (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 104 (a), (b), (c) and 134 (a) and (b)).

107. The Forum:

(a) Urged Governments to improve collection of quantitative data to enumerate and develop physical accounts of the full range of forest goods and services, including inventories of timber and other goods and services, and impacts of changes in forest use on the environment. This should also be done for substitute non-wood materials;

(b) Encouraged further development, by countries and international organizations, of rapid and low-cost valuation methods, including a focus on the development of approaches which incorporate a wide range of values, reflect the overall value of forest ecosystems, as appropriate, and identify the costs and benefits of sustainable forest management, as well as ways to internalize externalities;

(c) Requested relevant international organizations to develop and test rapid valuation methods that are policy relevant and efficient, that reflect regional and national characteristics and requirements, and to develop approaches for the identification of the costs and benefits, including incremental costs and benefits, of sustainable forest management which can be employed for a cost-efficient use of investment funds for forests;

(d) Requested countries and international organizations to assist developing countries in building and promoting capacity for the development and application of forest valuation methods.

6. Economic instruments, tax policies and land tenure

Conclusions

108. The Forum noted that economic instruments and tax policies are powerful tools in forest policy when applied within an effective forest policy and institutional framework. However, they may be ineffective or counterproductive in a situation of policy, institutional or regulatory failures.

109. Economic instruments in the forest sector should include consideration of opportunity costs of alternative land uses and opportunities in other sectors, and both public and private ownership of forests.

110. The ability to offer a wide variety of forest goods and services for sale in local, national and international markets can be an effective incentive for sustainable forest management. Additional information is needed on approaches to creating

markets for forest products, especially non-wood forest products and services, and on the role of the public and private sector in helping assure that new or expanded markets are consistent with all dimensions of sustainable forest management.

111. The Forum recognized the need for secure land tenure and user rights in the effective use of economic instruments as tools to support sustainable forest management and for investments of the private sector in the establishment and management of forest resources. However, to institutionalize this is a long-term process, and interim measures are required in most cases in view of the urgent need to regulate resource utilization and address the issues related to local and/or indigenous communities, as well as gender aspects.

112. The Forum recognized that economic instruments applied in the forest sector, including taxes and revenue collection, can be a source of financial support for improved management; these instruments can also support and promote sustainable forest management by providing incentives and disincentives.

113. The Forum recognized that the macroeconomic policies of countries may have extensive and enduring effects on the forest sector as well as on other sectors; consideration of these effects, as a component of programmes of macroeconomic structural adjustment, can provide the basis for informed decision-making, which can lead to sustainable economic growth and sustainable forest management.

114. It has been the experience of many countries that developments in other sectors that are, in some cases, the consequence of policies, can lead to unintended changes in the forest sector. Weak or inconsistent policies in other sectors, including but not limited to the agricultural sector, can undermine the use of any forest policy tools, including economic instruments.

Proposals for action

115. The Forum:

(a) Encouraged countries, with the assistance of relevant international organizations, to assess the potential scope and effective combination of economic instruments and tax policies as tools for promoting sustainable forest management, as appropriate, as part of their national forest programmes. This assessment should include but not be limited to collection of forest revenue from timber extraction;

(b) Encouraged countries to recognize and use, where applicable, an appropriate combination of regulations and economic instruments for achieving the objectives of forest policies, including the use of charges and forest revenue collection that also offer incentives for sustainable forest management practices;

(c) Encouraged countries to recognize the actual and potential impacts of economic instruments and tax policies as a means of providing incentives to engage in activities that avoid deforestation and forest degradation and that support sustainable forest management practices; and to examine, in collaboration with international organizations, when requested, the role of forest policy failures and policies in other sectors as a contributing factor in deforestation, forest degradation or unsustainable forest management; and to collaborate with international organizations in developing mitigating policies;

(d) Encouraged countries, within their respective legal framework, to support land tenure policies that recognize and respect legitimate access and use, and

property rights in order to support sustainable forest management and investment, recognizing that institutionalizing tenure is a long-term and complex process which requires interim measures to address urgent needs, in particular of local and/or indigenous communities;

(e) Requested relevant international organizations to undertake an up-to-date review of contemporary forest revenue collection systems for the use of forest products and services. The Forum encouraged countries to share their experiences in this area and to support this effort;

(f) Invited relevant international organizations to provide, on request, general and specific advice to countries on the design and administration of economic instruments and tax policies to promote sustainable forest management, and encouraged countries to offer examples of successes in using economic instruments to advance the practice of sustainable forest management;

(g) Encouraged countries to develop macroeconomic policies and policies in other sectors that support and contribute to sustainable forest management; and requested international financial and lending institutions to consider mitigating the impacts of macroeconomic structural adjustment programmes on forests consistent with sustainable forest management.

7. Future supply of and demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services

Conclusions

116. IFF recognized that the demand for and supply of wood and non-wood products and services of forests will continue to form the basis for the contribution of forests to economic and social development, particularly for poverty eradication. The need for commodities, including but not limited to wood, will provide one of the powerful motivations for conservation and sustainable management of forests. This future outlook does not eliminate, however, the need for improved information, forest policy implementation and forest management. Reliable forest inventory data are essential in the analysis of trends in demand for and supply of wood and non-wood products.

117. Most recent outlook studies have reached the general conclusion that at the global level, wood fibre supply will be broadly matched with demand without likely price increases, but at the national level some countries may experience shortages and possibly price increases. Furthermore, alternative sources of fibre, such as from recycled paper and non-wood fibre, now account for an increasing share of industrial fibre consumption. A number of factors, including effects of deforestation, forest degradation, the designation of additional forests as protected forest areas, markets and technologies, are leading to a gradual shift in some regions in the focus of wood harvesting to more intensively managed forests, including natural forests, planted forests, as well as trees outside forests. Due consideration of environmental, economic and social principles of sustainable forest management should be taken at appropriate levels in the planning and management of forests.

118. Global consumption of wood for fuel is larger than industrial roundwood consumption in terms of volume. Much work is required to accurately assess the impacts of fuelwood collection on forest resources, and the role of trees outside

forests. For most of the world's population, it is as a source of fuel that forests play their most important role in social and economic development.

119. Policies that set or affect the prices of wood and non-wood products and services are among the most important factors influencing demand and supply. Policies that distort the efficient operation of markets may contribute to the unsustainable management of forests. Furthermore, it is not only prices of forest products but also of their substitutes that need to be considered when assessing market policies and their environmental consequences.

120. Private and community ownership of forests and the private sector in general play an increasingly important role in sustaining production of industrial wood products. Private forests presently account for about half of world wood production and this share is expected to increase in the future. The increasing role of private owners, local and/or indigenous communities and market processes will present new challenges for choosing and implementing forest policies to achieve both wood and non-wood objectives for forests.

Proposals for action

121. The Forum encourages countries and international organizations to improve data collection and information dissemination through:

(a) Increasing the extent, quality and comparability of inventory data on forest resources, including both wood and non-wood forest products and services;

(b) Giving adequate attention to collection and reporting on the use of a broad range of non-wood products, including quantities gathered and consumed, ownership rights and their importance to rural and indigenous communities;

(c) The systematic collection and reporting of information on the source and use of wood fuels; and

(d) The provision of timely, useful and comparable data on prices of wood and non-wood products as well as their substitutes.

122. The Forum further encourages countries, including through international cooperation, to:

(a) Promote policies, as needed, to meet increasing demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services, through sustainable forest management, including, where appropriate, planted forests and trees outside forests, and work towards an internationally agreed definition of planted forests;

(b) Recognize the role of the private sector, where appropriate, in producing forest products and services. This role may need to be supported within a framework of policies, incentives and regulations, such as secure land tenure and appropriate tax policies to help ensure the improved management of forests and sustained production of a wide range of goods and services;

(c) Incorporate the supply of fuelwood and wood energy as well as efficient wood energy technologies as a crucial part of policy and planning exercises within the forestry, agriculture and energy sectors, and develop pilot studies to assess more accurately the impacts of fuelwood collection on trees and forests;

(d) Develop and implement policies designed to promote sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest goods and services that reflect a wide range of values, and to ensure that the benefits of commercialization of wood and non-wood forest goods and services contribute to improved management of forests and are equitably distributed to the people who protect and provide them;

(e) Review policies that have a direct effect on the price of forest products and of their substitutes, initiate studies on market behaviour, when appropriate, and recognize that appropriate prices can encourage and support sustainable forest management while discouraging overuse, waste, excess and inefficient manufacturing;

(f) Undertake studies on the cost and benefits of using renewable wood and non-wood forest products, as opposed to non-renewable substitutes.

8. Assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation of forest cover in environmentally critical areas

Conclusions

123. The Forum recognized that forests in environmentally critical areas are especially susceptible to degradation and destruction resulting from human activities and from natural disturbances. The Forum expanded the scope of attention to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forest cover in environmentally critical areas, sub-humid, arid and semi-arid areas in tropical and temperate regions, mountain ecosystems, wetlands, coastal systems in particular mangroves and small islands, as well as trees outside forests. It reiterated the proposals for action of IPF on fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and drought and noted their continuing relevance and validity. IFF acknowledged the decisions taken by the Convention to Combat Desertification with regard to the implementation of national action programmes as a major tool to combat desertification and drought.

124. The Forum noted that methods and technologies for the rehabilitation and management of forests in environmentally critical areas are well known, and stressed the importance of more effective policies, coordination and partnerships in addressing the ecological, social, cultural and economic problems associated with these systems. Partnerships and coordination should include affected countries, international organizations, development cooperation agencies and relevant major groups.

125. Planted forests, in particular of native species, where appropriate, have an important role to play in the rehabilitation of degraded land and in assisting to provide cover in environmentally critical areas.

126. The Forum reaffirmed the basic principles contained in chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and in the IPF proposals for action, and stressed the importance of action-oriented proposals, including through the provision of financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies as set out in chapters 33 and 34 of Agenda 21, and in this regard stressed the needs of least developed countries and of developing countries with low forest cover.

127. Mountain ecosystems deserve special attention because of the marginalization of mountain populations living in isolated and often cold areas, the importance of mountain forests for soil and watershed protection, the conservation of biological

diversity, and the conflict between economic use and environmental protection. Mountain cloud forests are of particular concern in this regard.

Proposals for action

128. The Forum recalled the IPF proposals for action relevant to this programme element (in particular, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 46 (a)-(f)).

129. The Forum:

(a) Encouraged countries and relevant international organizations and major groups to cooperate and coordinate activities concerning forests and trees in environmentally critical areas, and to contribute to more systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information, including social and economic data;

(b) Urged countries to place rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees in environmentally critical areas as a higher priority on national development agendas within the context of national forest programmes, as appropriate;

(c) Encouraged countries, in particular countries with low forest cover, to use planted forests and other means, including trees outside forests, in agroforestry, silvipastoral and analog forestry systems (forest management systems that seek to mimic natural forests in rehabilitation of degraded land), giving special consideration to using native species, where appropriate, as options for rehabilitating degraded lands and, where possible, as a basis for re-establishing natural forests;

(d) Urged countries to engage in raising awareness of the ecological, social, cultural and economic roles that planted and natural forests might fulfil in the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests in environmentally critical areas;

(e) Further urged international organizations and donor countries to strengthen their support to and collaboration with international programmes, including through the provision of financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies as set out in chapters 33 and 34 of Agenda 21 and through conventions directed to fragile ecosystems, in particular concerning the role of forests, other wooded lands and trees in the Convention to Combat Desertification and Agenda 21, chapters 12 and 13, which address the concerns of the poorer communities.

E. Forest-related work of international and regional organizations and under existing instruments

Conclusions

130. The Forum emphasized that Governments, international organizations and all interested parties should take a holistic approach to forest matters, which recognizes the importance of social, economic and environmental values and functions of forests, and use their comparative advantages to cooperate in support of management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

131. The Forum noted that many of the IPF proposals for action are directed towards international organizations and instruments, and that there is significant

unrealized potential for further strengthening and mobilizing the capacity of existing international and regional organizations and instruments to support and promote the goal of management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. This can be achieved through the enhancement of their complementarities, the provision of financial resources, better coordination and facilitation of the policy dialogue, and greater coherence of action, including consistent policy guidance at the level of their governing bodies. This approach would help to focus collective action on overall priorities. There is a need to encourage the forging of partnerships with other international and regional organizations and instruments to implement the IPF proposals for action directed towards them.

132. The Forum recognized the informal, high-level Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests as a successful informal partnership in initiating and strengthening forest-related collaboration among organizations within and outside the United Nations in support of the IPF proposals for action. The Task Force requires strong support from each of its member organizations. The strengthening of the work of the Task Force will facilitate the implementation of the IPF proposals for action. The Task Force should continue to practise coordination on an informal basis with respect to the implementation of the IPF proposals for action directed towards its member organizations.

133. The Forum acknowledged that in the context of the implementation of the IPF proposals for action, the real challenges ahead lie in further strengthening the existing partnerships among Task Force members and other international and regional organizations and instruments in respect of facilitating the establishment of new modalities of cooperation between Task Force members and other partners for making the best use of all the available forest-related institutional capabilities that exist at the regional and international levels. In this regard, through national forest programmes, special attention should be paid to supporting efforts of countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, towards sustainable forest management.

134. The Forum underlined that the IPF proposals for action as a whole constitute an important integrated and multisectoral approach for the achievement of the sustainable forest management of all types of forests. Complementary objectives and approaches on forest-related issues for promoting work among institutions, organizations and instruments are crucial to improving efficiency and coordination, which should be built upon the IPF proposals for action. Future efforts by international organizations, multilateral institutions and instruments should be flexible in order to accommodate the existing and emerging needs as well as different levels of social and economic development of countries, in particular developing countries. The Forum also encouraged them to provide for the effective participation of and collaboration with all interested parties.

135. The Forum recognized the utility of designing a comprehensive directory of forest-related international and regional organizations including information regarding relevant global and regional conventions. The directory could include, *inter alia*, the available institutional information concerning missions, mandates, organizational structures, programmes, activities, personnel and budget, as well as information on collaborative forest-related work and activities of organizations and institutions. The directory should be updated on a regular basis. FAO, in cooperation with other member organizations of the Task Force, could have a leading role.

Additional information about bilateral and multilateral forest-related activities, private sector and research institutions and selected publications could also be included, as provided by the parties involved in such activities. It is suggested that such a directory be made accessible to all Governments and other interested parties in electronic form, for example, on the Internet.

136. The Forum emphasized that success of the efforts being undertaken by various United Nations bodies on forest-related issues depends on addressing the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable forest management in the context of sustainable development, in a balanced manner. It was also noted that the specific conditions of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in terms of financial, technical and technological capabilities require particular attention. Inter-agency coordination should pay special attention to integrating the needs of developing countries with low forest cover in relevant policies and programmes.

137. With respect to the Forum programme of work under category II.e, according to which it is to "Consider forest-related work of international and regional organizations. Further examine the forest-related work being carried out by international and regional organizations and under existing instruments in order to identify gaps and overlaps", the Forum noted that the Secretariat's documentation provided useful input to deliberations in the Forum regarding issues to be dealt with under category III.

138. The Forum noted that in future it will be necessary to examine practical approaches based on results expected to be achieved and to focus on experiences gained in the implementation of existing instruments and the work programmes of international and regional organizations oriented towards achieving sustainable forest management.

Proposals for action

139. The Forum called upon all interested parties, including the governing bodies of relevant international and regional organizations and instruments, to:

(a) Identify practical means for mobilizing their diverse strengths and capabilities to support country-level efforts in implementing the proposals for action adopted by IPF, taking into account the need to enhance the active participation of all parties concerned;

(b) Foster synergies among different international and regional organizations and instruments, and encourage their active participation in and contribution to international forest policy dialogue, with due consideration to the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/Forum proposals for action;

(c) Clarify the respective roles and work to be carried out by international and regional organizations and instruments with respect to the forest-related programmes of action of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and its follow-up.

140. The Forum called upon Governments to:

(a) Utilize, as appropriate, the expertise provided by international and regional organizations and instruments in the formulation of their national forest programmes, in particular to better integrate cross-sectoral linkages and the social,

economic and environmental aspects of sustainable forest management into national policies;

(b) Establish and strengthen, as appropriate, effective national arrangements to provide coordinated and effective guidance to multilateral organizations.

141. The Forum called upon the secretariats of the Task Force member organizations to:

(a) Inform their governing bodies about the progress and outcome of the IPF/IFF process so as to strengthen their forest-related activities and their inter-agency cooperation in this regard;

(b) Explore and develop the potential for institutional synergies with other partners, especially with regional development banks, regional commissions and other regional intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, other international organizations and private sector institutions;

(c) Cooperate towards developing a comprehensive directory of forest-related international and regional organizations and instruments engaged in forest-related activities, including their mandates, missions, organizational structures, programmes, activities, personnel and budget, as well as information on collaborative forest-related work and activities of organizations and instruments. The directory should be updated on a regular basis. FAO, in cooperation with other member organizations of the Task Force, could have a leading role in this task.

142. The Forum called upon Governments to provide guidance to the governing bodies of international and regional organizations and instruments, and to encourage non-governmental organizations to cooperate in:

(a) Implementing activities to increase public awareness of the direct and indirect benefits derived from forests, at national, subregional, regional and global levels;

(b) Facilitating inter-institutional consultation on cross-sectoral forest policies, policy reforms, and planning and programmes for sustainable forest management;

(c) Enhancing cost-effective data systems, to allow the preparation and the timely dissemination of information on progress in sustainable forest management.

143. The Forum called upon relevant international and regional organizations and instruments to consider, in their relevant policies and programmes, the needs and requirements of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with special attention to low forest cover countries.

144. The Forum urged international and regional organizations and governing bodies of instruments to support forest programmes and to integrate forest-related aspects in programmes aimed at poverty alleviation, decreasing population pressures, promoting food security and promoting environmental awareness.

III. International arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests

145. The proposed terms of reference for an international arrangement on forests are set out in the appendix below.

Appendix

International arrangement on forests

I. Objective

1. The main objective of this international arrangement on forests is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. The purpose of such an international arrangement would be to promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels, to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development, and to carry out principal functions, based on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forestry (Forest Principles), chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) process, in a manner consistent with and complementary to existing international legally binding instruments relevant to forests.

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II. Principal functions

2. To achieve the objective, this international arrangement on forests will perform the following functions:

(a) Facilitate and promote the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action as well as other actions, which may be agreed upon, including through national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests; catalyse, mobilize and generate financial resources; and mobilize and channel technical and scientific resources to this end, including by taking steps towards the broadening and development of mechanisms and/or further initiatives to enhance international cooperation;

(b) Provide a forum for continued policy development and dialogue among Governments, which would involve international organizations and other interested parties, including major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, to foster a common understanding on sustainable forest management and to address forest issues and emerging areas of priority concern in a holistic, comprehensive and integrated manner;

(c) Enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as contribute to synergies among them, including coordination among donors;

(d) Foster international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels;

(e) Monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by regional and international organizations, institutions and instruments, and on this basis consider future actions needed;

(f) Strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests through: ministerial engagement; developing ways to liaise with the governing bodies of international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments; and the promotion of action-oriented dialogue and policy formulation related to forests.

III. Structure

3. To achieve the objective and to carry out the functions outlined above, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly would:

(a) Establish an intergovernmental body which may be called the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF);

(b) Invite the executive heads of relevant organizations of the United Nations system and heads of other relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a collaborative partnership on forests to support the work of UNFF and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants;

(c) Within five years, on the basis of the assessment referred to in paragraph 2 (e) above, consider with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. This process could develop the financial provisions to implement any future agreed legal framework. The process could also consider recommendations made by expert groups (see para. 8 below) on the establishment of mechanisms on finance, technology transfer and trade;

(d) Take steps to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support to enable the implementation of sustainable forest management, as recommended under the IPF and IFF processes.

IV. Working modalities of UNFF

4. UNFF should be open to all States and operate in a transparent and participatory manner. Relevant international and regional organizations, including regional economic integration organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, should also be involved.

5. UNFF would initially meet annually, for a period of up to two weeks, subject to the review referred to below. UNFF would have a high-level ministerial segment for two to three days, as required. The high-level segment could include a one-day policy dialogue with the heads of organizations participating in the collaborative partnership, as well as other forest-related international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments. UNFF should ensure the opportunity to receive and consider inputs from representatives of major groups as identified in Agenda 21, in particular through the organization of multi-stakeholder dialogues.

6. UNFF would work on the basis of a multi-year programme of work, drawing on the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

7. At its first meeting on Environment and Development, UNFF will adopt its multi-year programme of work and develop a plan of action for the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, which will address financial provisions.

8. UNFF may recommend, as appropriate, the convening of ad hoc expert groups of limited duration, involving experts from developed and developing countries, for scientific and technical advice, as well as to consider mechanisms and strategies for the finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies; and encourage country-sponsored initiatives, such as international expert meetings.

V. Institutional coordination and cooperation for implementation

9. The collaborative partnership referred to in paragraph 3 (b) above could build on a high-level, informal group, such as the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests, which would receive guidance from UNFF; facilitate and promote coordinated and cooperative action, including joint programming and submissions of coordinated proposals to the respective governing bodies; and facilitate donor coordination. Such a partnership would submit coordinated inputs and progress reports to UNFF, operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner, and undertake periodic reviews of its effectiveness.

VI. Secretariat

10. A compact secretariat, comprised of highly qualified staff, constituted in accordance with established rules and procedures of the United Nations and strengthened through staff from secretariats of international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, should be established to support the work described above.

VII. Financial support

11. The funding for the functioning of the arrangement should be mobilized from the regular budget of the United Nations, within existing resources, resources of organizations participating in the partnership and extrabudgetary resources provided by interested donors. Specific modalities would be determined by relevant bodies of the United Nations and the governing bodies of the other organizations concerned.

VIII. Review

12. The international arrangement on forests should be dynamic and adapt to evolving conditions. Accordingly, the effectiveness of this arrangement would be reviewed in five years.

III. Consideration of the programme elements of the Forum

A. Programme element I

1. The Forum considered agenda item 3 in its Working Group I, at its 1st to 9th meetings, on 31 January and on 2-4, 7, 8 and 10 February 2000. The Plenary of the Forum also considered programme elements I.a and I.b at its 5th meeting, on 11 February.

2. Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Bagher Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran).

3. At its 5th meeting, on 11 February, the Plenary of the Forum adopted a draft decision regarding programme element I (I.a and I.b) (see chap. II, draft decision).

B. Programme element II

4. The Forum considered agenda item 4 in its Working Groups, I and II. Working Group I considered programme elements II.d (i-iv) and II.e at its 1st to 9th meetings, on 31 January and on 2-4, 7, 8 and 10 February. Working Group II considered programme elements II.a, II.b, II.c and II.d (v-viii) at its 1st to 17th meetings, on 31 January and on 2-4 and 7-10 February. The Plenary of the Forum also considered Programme element II (II a-c, II.d (i-viii) and II.e) at its 5th meeting, on 11 February.

5. Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Bagher Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Working Group II under the chairmanship of Ilkka Ristimaki (Finland).

6. At its 5th meeting, on 11 February, the Plenary of the Forum adopted a draft decision regarding programme element II (II.a, II.b, II.c, II.d (i-viii) and II.e) (see chap. II, draft decision).

C. Programme element III

7. The Forum considered agenda item 5 in its Contact Group at its 1st to 8th meetings, on 7 to 10 February. The Plenary of the Forum also considered Programme element III at its 2nd to 5th meetings, on 1, 4 and 11 February.

8. The Contact Group met under the chairmanship of Samuel R. Insanally (Guyana).

9. At its 5th meeting, on 11 February, the Plenary of the Forum adopted a draft decision regarding programme element III (see chap. II, draft decision).

IV. Other matters

No matters were discussed under agenda item 6.

V. Adoption of the report

1. At its 5th meeting, on 11 February 2000, the Co-Chairman (Islamic Republic of Iran) introduced the draft report on its fourth session (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.2 and Add.1-7), and documents E/CN.17/IFF/2000/5, E/CN.17/IFF/2000/6 and relevant sections of E/CN.17/1999/25, as well as a number of draft texts.

2. At the same meeting, the Forum took note of the draft texts and adopted its report.

VI. Organizational and other matters

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests of the Commission on Sustainable Development held its fourth session from 31 January to 11 February 2000, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1999/280 of 29 July 1999. The Forum held 5 meetings (1st to 5th meetings).

2. The session was opened by one of the Co-Chairmen, Bagher Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran).

3. At the same meeting, the Forum heard statements by the following keynote speakers: Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; David Harcharik, Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and Chairman, Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests; Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme; and Eimi Watanabe, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

4. The Chairman of the Commission on Sustainable Development, Juan Mayr Maldonado (Colombia), also addressed the Forum.

5. At the 2nd meeting, on 1 February, the Coordinator and Head of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests secretariat made a presentation to the Forum.

B. Election of officers

6. At its 1st meeting, on 31 January, the Forum elected Andrea Alban (Colombia) as Vice-Chairperson by acclamation. It was also agreed that she would also serve as Rapporteur.

7. At its 3rd meeting, on 1 February, the Forum elected Claude Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire) as Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

8. The Bureau of the Forum comprised the following officers:

Co-Chairmen:

Bagher Asadi (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Ilkka Ristimaki (Finland)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Andrea Alban (Colombia)
Claude Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire)
Yevgeny Kuzmichev (Russian Federation)

Rapporteur:

Andrea Alban (Colombia)

C. Agenda and organization of work

9. At its 1st meeting, on 31 January, the Forum adopted its provisional agenda contained in document E/CN.17/IFF/2000/1, and approved its organization of work. The agenda was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Promoting and facilitating the implementation of the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and reviewing, monitoring and reporting on progress in the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests:
   (a) Promoting and facilitating implementation (programme element I.a);
   (b) Monitoring progress in implementation (programme element I.b).
4. Matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests process:
   (a) Need for financial resources (programme element II.a);
   (b) Trade and environment (programme element II.b);
   (c) Transfer of environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management (programme element II.c);
   (d) Issues that need further clarification:
      (i) Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation (programme element II.d (i));
      (ii) Traditional forest-related knowledge (programme element II.d (ii));
      (iii) Forest conservation and protected areas (programme element II.d (iii));
      (iv) Forest research (programme element II.d (iv));
      (v) Valuation of forest goods and services (programme element II.d (v));
      (vi) Economic instruments, tax policies and land tenure (programme element II.d (vi));
      (vii) Future supply of and demand for wood and non-wood forest products (programme element II.d (vii));
      (viii) Assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation of forest cover in environmentally critical areas (programme element II.d (viii));
   (e) Forest-related work of international and regional organizations and under existing instruments (programme element II.e).

5. International arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (programme element III).

6. Other matters.

7. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its fourth session.

10. Also at its 1st meeting, the Forum agreed to establish two in-session working groups, each to be chaired by one of the Co-Chairmen.

D. Attendance

11. The session was attended by representatives of 44 States members of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations and for the European Community, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system, and secretariats of treaty bodies, as well as observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended. A list of participants is contained in the annex.

E. Documentation

12. The Forum had before it the following documents:

(a) Note by the Secretariat on forest-related work of international and regional organizations and under existing instruments (E/CN.17/IFF/1999/15);

(b) Report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its third session (Geneva, 3-14 May 1999) (E/CN.17/IFF/1999/25);

(c) Note by the Secretariat on priority forest policy issues (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/2);

(d) Note by the Secretariat on elements and functions for a future international arrangement and mechanism (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/3);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4);

(f) Note by the Secretariat on promoting and facilitating implementation (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/5);

(g) Note by the Secretariat on forest-related work of international and regional organizations and under existing instruments (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/6);

(h) Letter dated 23 December 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Tehran Declaration and report of the Open-ended International Meeting of Experts on the Special Needs and Requirements of Developing Countries with Low Forest Cover and Unique Types of Forests, held at Tehran from 4 to 8 October 1999 (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/7);

(i) Letter dated 19 January 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of Indonesia and Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the summary report of the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development entitled "Our Forests ... Our Future" (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/8);

(j) Letter dated 21 January 2000 from the Ambassador and Chargé d'affaires of Costa Rica to the United Nations and the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the consolidated report of the Costa Rica-Canada Initiative (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/9);

(k) Letter dated 6 January 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the South Pacific Subregional Workshop on Intergovernmental Forum on Forests Issues, held in Fiji from 22 to 24 September 1999 (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/10);

(l) Draft report of the Forum on its fourth session (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/L.2 and Add.1-7).

Annex

Attendance

Members

Algeria:	Abdallah Baali, Abderrahmane Merouane
Angola:	Tomas Pedro Caetano, Margarida Izata, Goncalves Miguel
Brazil:	Everton Vieira Vargas, Antonio Fernando Cruz de Mello, Carlos Alberto Michaelsen Den Hartog, Barbara Briglia Tavora, Antonio Ricardo Fernandes Cavalcante, Vicente de Paulo Queiroz Nogueira, Antonio Carlos do Prado, Luiz Roberto Graça, Rubens Cristiano Damas Garlipp, Flavio Montiel
Bulgaria:	Vladimir Sotirov, Zvetolyub Basmajiev
Cameroon:	
Canada:	Jazques Carette, Dick Ballhorn, Ken Macartney, Jocelyne Caloz, Denyse Rousseau, Rosalie McConnell, Ralph Roberts, Denis Chouinard, Nigel Bankes, Mike Fullerton, Jerome Catimel, David Morel, Germain Paré, Cliff Walis, Charlene Higgins-Bissoonvath, Joel Neuheimer, Tony Rotherham
China:	Qu Guilin, Zhang Shougong, Su Ming, Zhang Xiaoan, Bai Yongjie, Liu Xin, Zhou Fang
Colombia:	Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento, Clemencia Forero Ucros, Maria Andrea Alban, Manuel Rodriguez Becerra, Angela Andrade Perrez, Mauricio Baquero
Côte d'Ivoire:	Vincent Lohoues, Claude Bpuah-Kamon, Gaston Koffi Yao
Cuba:	Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, Rafael Dáusa Céspedes, Modesto Fernández, Diaz-Silveira, Elias Linares Landa, Ileana Nunez Mordoche, Rogelio Curbelo
Czech Republic:	Jaromir Vašíček, Tomáš Staněk, Jan Kára
Democratic People's Republic of Korea:	
Democratic Republic of the Congo:	
Denmark:	T. Mailand Christensen, Claus Jespersen, Veit Koester, Peter Gebert, Thure Christiansen, Anne Simonsen, Kirsten Worm, Jacob Andersen

Djibouti:	Ali Mohamed Daoud
Egypt:	Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Ahmed Darwish, Ahmed Khorched, Hazem Fahmy, Ahmed Ihab Gamaleldin
Finland:	Birgitta Stenius-Mladenov, Ilkka Ristimaki, Anders Portin, Markku Aho, Aira Paivoke, Jukka Uosukainen, Jouni Suoheimo, Esa Hyvarinen, Leena Karjalainen-Balk, Kimmo Sinivuori, Ismo Kolehmainen, Timo Nyrhinen, Esko Joutsamo, Pekka Kallio-Mannila
France:	Alain Dejammet, Raymond Quereilhac, Genevieve Verbrugge, Bernard Chevalier, Catherine Gras, Daniel Le Gargasson
Germany:	Martin Lutz, Ulrich Hoenisch, Gabriela Bennemann, Reinhard Krapp, Helmut Dotzauer, Hagen Frost, Ingrid-Gabriella Hoven, Julia Werner, Karl Keilen, Christian Mersmann, Michael Lammertz, Marian Freiherr von Gravenreuth, Astrid Skala-Kuhmann, Martin Kaiser
Guyana:	Samel R. Insanally, James Singh, Alison Drayton
Hungary:	Gyula Holdampf, Peter Csóka, Sandor Mozes
India:	C. P. Oberai, A. N. Prasad, A. K. Mukeriji
Indonesia:	Makarim Wibisono, Soemadi D. M. Brotodiningrat, Untung Iskandar, Slkamet Hidayat, Harry Santoso, Djauhari Oratmangun, Ngurah Swajaya, Salman Al Farisi
Iran (Islamic Republic of):	Seyed Hadi Nejad Hosseinian, Seyed Hamid Kalantari Hemmat Abadi, Hossein Moeini, Bagher Asadi, Taghi Shamekhi, Seyed Mohammad Ali Hagi Mirsadeghi, Mohsen Esperi
Ireland:	Michael Predergast, Bridie Cullinane, Patrick McDonnell, Dympna Hayes
Italy:	Sergio Vento, Gaetano Zucconi, Giovanni Brauzzi, Fabio Casese, Paolo Vicentini, Alfredo Guillet, Luca Ferruzzi
Japan:	Makito Takahasi, Koichiro Seki, Ichiro Nagame, Osamu Hashiramoto, Kenji Fujita, Horishi Nakata, Mayu Hagiwara, Makiko Uemoto, Norimasa Shimomura
Kazakhstan:	Medina B. Jarbussynova, Serik Zhanibekov
Lebanon:	
Mauritania:	
Mauritius:	Seemadree Appanah

Mexico:	Manuel Tello, Mauricio Escanero, Ma. Teresa Bandala-Medina, Alejandra Nunez-Becerra, Santiago Lorenzo-Alonso, Gerardo Seguar, Victor Sosa-Cedillo, Patricia Arendar-Lerner, Aurelio Fierros, Martha Vazquez, Laura Lara-Granados, Mario Duarte-Villarello, Alejandro Monteagudo, Beatriz Rodriguez-Aragon
Mozambique:	Mauricio Xerinda, Nuno Tomas
Netherlands:	Pieter Verbeek, Frits Thissen, Antonius Van der Zon, Peter Schutz, Chista Licher, Marja Cochius, Alexandra Valkenburg
New Zealand:	Michael Powles, Trevor Hughes, John Goodman, Don Wijerwadana, Roger Lincoln, Grant Robertson, James Griffiths
Nicaragua:	Marina Stadthagen
Niger:	Adamou Issaka Ounteini
Panama:	Gonzalo A. Menendez Gonzalez, Angelica Jacome, Oscar B. Vallarino, Angel V. Urena
Paraguay:	
Peru:	Francisco A. Tudela, Manuel Picasso, Amelia Torres, Ruben Espinoza, Carmen Rosa-Arias
Philippines:	Libran N. Cabactulan, Rogelio C. Serrano, Glenn F. Corpin
Portugal:	Julio Mascarenhas, João Fins-do-Lago, Carlos Morais, Maria Conceição Ferreira, Luis Costa Leal, João Sousa Teixeira, Antonio Emidio Santos, Manuela Domingues, Maia da Graça Rato, Maria Isabel Matos Preto, Paulo Tavares Canaveira, Patricia Gaspar
Republic of Korea:	Choi Seok-young, Yoon Jong Soo, Oh Young Ju, Kang Hoduck, Chong Se-kyung
Russian Federation:	Evgeny P. Kuzmichev, Aleksandr M. Gudyma, Vassily A. Nebenzia, Elena G. Kulikova, Garry L. Kotliar, Dmitry I. Maksimychev, Sergey F. Bulgachenko, Sergey O. Fedorov
Slovakia:	Milan Hubcej, Igor Vencel
Spain:	Inocencio F. Arias, Francisco Rabena, Jose M. Solano, Silvia Cortes
Sri Lanka:	
Sudan:	Abdelaziem Yousif

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:	Marjan Djorcev, Naste Calovski, Ljubco Nestorovski, Donka Gligorova, Dimitar Rolevski, Goran Stevcevski
Tunisia:	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:	Mark Runacres, Ian Symons, John Hudson, John Carpenter, Andrew Bennett, Richard Dewdney, Mike Dudley, David Bills, Libby Jones, Tim Rollinson, Sheila McCabe, Scott Ghagan, Ben Stoppard, Kirsty Paton, Michael Massey, Stuart Wilson, Graham Bruford, Anand Madhvani
United States of America:	Stephanie Caswell, Jan McAlpine, De Andra Beck, Denise Ingram, Adela Backiel, Brooks Yeager, Lynette Poulton, Hannah Rickert, Jennifer Bergeron, Militsa Plavsic, Sarah Smiley, David Brooks, Franklin Moore, Mary Coulombe, Tom Isle
Venezuela:	

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Chile, Comoros, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Estonia, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Monaco, Morocco, Nepal, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Samoa, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Entities represented by observers

European Community

Non-Member States maintaining permanent observer missions at Headquarters

Switzerland

Specialized agencies and related organizations

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, World Meteorological Organization, World Bank, World Trade Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, Centre for International Forestry Research, International Tropical Timber Organization, International Organization of la Francophonie, Organization of African Unity, International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Southern African Development Community

Secretariats of treaty bodies

Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

United Nations

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme

Non-governmental organizations

Asociacio Napguana, Association of Third World Studies, Deutscher Natürschützung, Forest Alliance of British Columbia, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace International, International Council of Environmental Law, International Indian Treaty Council, International Union of Forestry Research Organizations, International Wood Products Association, Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement, Rainforest Foundation USA, Sierra Club, Sobrevivencia, UNED-UK, Woods Hole Research Centre, World Business Council on Sustainable Development, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature.

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Preliminary views and suggestions on the preparations for the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Background

1. At the nineteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in 1997, which undertook the five-year comprehensive review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Governments committed themselves to ensuring that the 10-year comprehensive review would demonstrate greater measurable progress in achieving sustainable development.

2. In its resolution 53/188, the General Assembly stressed the importance of high-quality preparations for the forthcoming 10-year review, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, for consideration at its fifty-fifth session in the year 2000, a report on possible ways and means of ensuring effective preparations for the review.

3. In follow-up to that resolution, the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its seventh session, requested the Secretary-General to submit a preliminary report for initial discussion at its eighth session, containing, *inter alia*, suggestions on the form, scope and nature of the preparatory process for the 10-year review, with a view to providing guidance to the Secretary-General in preparing his report for the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

4. In its resolution 54/218, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include the views of Member States in his report to the Commission at its eighth session, and invited Member States to submit their views to the Secretariat. To the extent that responses of Member States have been received at the time of submission of the present report, they are reflected. Views and suggestions which Governments may wish to submit at a later stage will be incorporated into the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the Assembly.

II. General considerations

5. The main challenge of the 2002 review is to organize an effective and efficient, participatory event of high political profile and visibility. High-quality and timely preparations will be essential to the success of the 2002 event. Effective preparations should start from a clear set of ideas about the goals and substantive focus of the 2002 review, its desired outcome and the organization of the preparatory process.

6. Many Governments stressed that there is a need to revitalize the international dialogue on sustainable development and strengthen the commitment of the international community to sustainable development. Governments felt that the 10-year review should be seen as an opportunity to mobilize political support for the further implementation of the outcome of UNCED, in particular Agenda 21.

7. Governments stressed that Agenda 21 continues to provide a solid and vital foundation on which to build. While Agenda 21 should not be renegotiated, the review process should identify new and emerging areas that were not included in Agenda 21 and would warrant consideration.

8. Several Governments emphasized that the 2002 review will have the potential to increase the level of commitment to sustainable development by civil society partners if it is based on the notion of shared responsibility. The involvement and participation of business and industry, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community and other major groups will be crucial and should be supported, not only in the event itself but also throughout the preparatory process.

III. Format, participation and venue of the 2002 event

9. While most Governments are of the opinion that the 2002 event should be organized as a special conference, organizing it as a special session of the General Assembly has also been put forth as an option. Several proposals were made on the form and the title of the event to acknowledge its importance and high political profile. Proposals include: (a) a ministerial conference, including a summit segment, with the participation of heads of state and government; (b) a world conference at the level of heads of state and government; (c) a conference, with participation at least at the ministerial level; (d) a world summit conference on sustainable development, and (e) a world conference on sustainable development. There is, however, a common recognition that the event should provide for high political visibility and attract participation at the highest political level.

10. Most Governments are of the opinion that the 2002 event should be held at a location other than United Nations Headquarters, preferably in the developing world. Specifically, Africa or Asia was proposed. As for the timing, it was proposed to hold the event in June 2002 so as to coincide with the tenth anniversary of UNCED.

11. Governments suggested that participation should include but not necessarily be limited to Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, secretariats of the UNCED and post-UNCED conventions relevant to Agenda 21, secretariats of relevant functional commissions (e.g., the Commissions for Social Development and on Population and Development, the Status of Women and Human Settlements), and major groups as defined by Agenda 21.

12. Ensuring adequate participation of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in both the participatory process and the event itself are of great concern to many Governments.

13. Many Governments stressed the importance of ensuring a productive dialogue among all partners of civil society, thereby building on the modalities that have successfully evolved in the Commission. Adequate arrangements should be made during the preparatory process and in the event itself, bearing in mind their intergovernmental nature and the rules and procedures of the United Nations.

14. With regard to the participation of major groups in the 2002 event, many Governments stressed that major groups from developing countries should be assisted so as to ensure a fair balance between developed and developing country major group representation.

15. Various Governments suggested that the Commission, at its eighth session, should determine the basic elements for the 2002 review process. The General Assembly, at its fifty-fifth session, should elaborate on the form, scope and nature of the process and adopt a resolution thereon.

IV. Scope of the review

16. Many Governments emphasized that the 2002 review should focus on the comprehensive and critical review and assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21. Reviews and assessments should be carried out at all levels, including the local, national, regional and international levels, and by Governments and all other national stakeholders and the United Nations system. Actions taken to implement Agenda 21 and constraints that have hampered its effective implementation need to be addressed, along with measures to improve the further implementation of Agenda 21. The comprehensive review and assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21 would serve to identify: (a) areas where progress has been made; (b) areas where further effort are needed; and (c) new challenges and opportunities that have emerged since UNCED, in particular those resulting from globalization and technological progress, such as in the area of new communication technology.

17. Some Governments suggested that an evaluation of the results achieved in the implementation of the environment-related conventions should also be carried out. Such evaluation should, however, not entail any interference with the independent and autonomous decision-making processes of the respective conferences of the parties.

18. Several Governments also suggested undertaking an evaluation of the effectiveness and adequacy of international financial institutions as well as international finance mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility.

V. Goals and focus

19. Many Governments emphasized the need for establishing clear goals for the 2002 event, in part to establish the political importance of the 2002 event in the eyes of high-level policy makers and the public at large as well as to ensure the desired outcome. Such goals could include:

(a) Comprehensive and critical assessment of the progress that has been made in sustainable development at all levels and by Governments and all other stakeholders;

(b) Identification of new challenges since UNCED that have not been included in Agenda 21 and of priorities for further action, and ways to address those challenges and priorities;

(c) Endorsement of renewed efforts to attain the UNCED commitments and to further implement the concept of sustainable development, as it encompasses

the interdependent triangle of social, economic and environmental dimensions;

(d) Adoption of measures for an effective and efficient follow up to the 10-year review, including a programme of action for the improved implementation of Agenda 21, strengthening the institutional capacity of the United Nations system to promote sustainable development, improvements in the methods of work of the Commission and a future work programme for the Commission.

20. Governments stressed that the agenda for the 2002 review should be agreed through a process of consultations between Governments and with the active involvement of all stakeholders. Many Governments highlighted the need for a focused agenda, which would greatly facilitate the preparatory process, provide a point of departure for addressing priorities and new challenges in the field of sustainable development, and allow for substantive and forward-looking results. While some Governments favoured a focus on cross-sectoral issues, others suggested including discussions on important sectoral areas, such as forests, oceans, climate, freshwater and energy. Many Governments advocated a balance between the sectoral and cross-sectoral issues of Agenda 21.

21. A number of Governments emphasized that priorities should be chosen on which to focus the agenda of the 2002 review. In choosing priorities, Governments suggested the following considerations:

(a) The economic and social pillars of sustainable development should be given more consideration in integrating all dimensions of sustainable development;

(b) The 2002 review should put a special focus on development aspects. In that context, poverty reduction should be a central issue, and the interrelations between poverty reduction and sustainable development should be adequately addressed;

(c) Moving towards more sustainable patterns of production and consumption patterns continues to be of great importance;

(d) New developments at the global level since UNCED should be taken into account. Globalization, foreign direct investment, new financial instruments and technological advances, such as in the areas of information and communication technology, present challenges and opportunities for sustainable development. Financing for sustainable development should be discussed in such a broader perspective. It was suggested that consideration be given to the broad-based theme "Investment for sustainable development";

(e) While implementation of sustainable development has to occur mainly at the national level, global institutions play an important role in assisting countries in developing and implementing appropriate policies and measures. Ways of strengthening global institutions and instruments in the field of sustainable development should therefore be addressed in the 2002 review;

(f) The implementation of the target to adopt a national sustainable development strategy by 2002, which was agreed by all countries, should be reviewed, with a view to learning from experience and exploring ways of improving the quality and relevance of such strategies;

(g) The implementation of the outcome of the 2002 review needs to be assured. In this regard, suitable instruments should be identified and emphasis given to the improved coordination and integration of relevant policies and institutional arrangements.

VI. Preparatory process

22. Most Governments emphasized the importance of a forward-looking, problem-solving, action-oriented preparatory process.

23. Various Governments stressed that the 10-year review should keep in mind the need to take a coordinated and integrated approach to the implementation of all the relevant major United Nations conferences since UNCED. The outcomes of the five-year reviews of the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) should feed into the review process. The outcomes of the South-South Summit in April 2000 and the high-level consultations on finance for development in 2001 could also add value to the review process.

24. Several Governments stressed the importance of enhancing coherence in various intergovernmental

bodies and processes, and strengthening linkages and coordination among environment-related conventions and institutional arrangements. Efforts along these lines would help in maintaining the momentum for global progress towards sustainable development.

25. Many Governments proposed that based on the outcome of the preparatory process, the 2002 event should confirm the priorities and emerging issues to be focused on during the next 10-year programme, approve appropriate solutions to the obstacles and key problems identified during the preparatory process, and adopt a 10-year programme of work for the improved implementation of Agenda 21. This work programme should be focused, implementable, measurable and achievable within the suggested time-frame.

A. Preparations at the national and regional levels

26. Most Governments emphasized that priority should be given to review processes that are country- and region-based. It was emphasized that countries need to make their own assessments through a collective effort, including Governments and all other stakeholders. The establishment of national working groups of experts could contribute to a coordinated review process at the country level and facilitate interlinkages with regional preparatory processes.

27. Many Governments proposed to focus the national preparatory processes on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21, highlighting the areas where progress had been made and identifying problem areas and priorities for further action.

28. Most Governments stressed that the 2002 review process should include a strong regional component. Regional preparatory processes should be established to determine, based on the outcome of the national preparatory processes, regional priorities and new initiatives for the further implementation of Agenda 21, including, as suggested, the joint application of best practices by some countries. The elements for future work in the field of sustainable development that were identified during the national and regional preparatory processes should inform the intergovernmental preparatory process.

29. The national councils for sustainable development or their equivalents could play an important role in facilitating national preparations and linking such preparations to regional preparatory processes. A major purpose of the forthcoming meeting of national councils for sustainable development being organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Earth Council prior to the eighth session of the Commission would be to discuss ways and means to consolidate country assessments on progress achieved in sustainable development into comprehensive regional assessments.

30. The regional commissions could also greatly facilitate regional preparations. The regional consultative meetings, which were organized by the Department and the respective regional commissions for Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean in 1999 and 2000, discussed regional preparations for the 10-year reviews of the implementation of Agenda 21 as well as the involvement of the regional commissions in these preparations. One of the main outcomes of the regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean was the mandate to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to undertake a regional review of the implementation of Agenda 21 and to organize a Latin American and Caribbean preparatory meeting in 2001. The Economic Commission for Africa organized a high-level stakeholders meeting on sustainable development in January 2000, which considered and recommended key steps in the organization of the African preparatory process for the 2002 review.

31. The involvement of national focal points for national reporting will be important. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is planning a meeting with the participation of focal points for national reporting in late 2000. The planned meeting could assess the effectiveness of the current reporting process with a view to making suggestions for possible improvements.

32. Many Governments stressed that developing countries would need technical and financial assistance from the international community to prepare effectively for and participate in the national and regional preparatory processes.

B. Intergovernmental process

33. The intergovernmental preparatory process should commence well in advance with the

organization of a series of preparatory sessions. Many Governments proposed that the Commission serve as the preparatory committee for the intergovernmental preparatory process. Other options mentioned included the Economic and Social Council, an ad hoc committee of the General Assembly or an additional preparatory committee. In general, it was stressed that any option retained should ensure universal participation.

34. Most Governments felt that an open-ended intergovernmental preparatory process, including a number of preparatory sessions, should precede the 2002 event. Governments were also of the view that the 10-year review process should be coordinated and integrated with the preparations for the tenth session of the Commission in 2002. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work, the tenth session of the Commission is devoted to a comprehensive review of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly.

35. The Commission with its established practice of participatory involvement of Governments, including ministers, international organizations and major groups, has the capacity to prepare for the 2002 review. Furthermore, the established provisions for financial support for the participation of countries that are members of the Commission greatly facilitate the involvement of national experts. The General Assembly could decide that for the intergovernmental preparatory process for the 2002 review, an open-ended format could be applied in the Commission to allow for participation by all Governments. A proposal was made to support broad participation of developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in the intergovernmental preparatory process through a trust fund.

36. The intergovernmental preparatory process under the aegis of the Commission could be organized in three preparatory sessions, which would replace the two inter-sessional working group meetings and the regular tenth session of the Commission. These three sessions should deal with both substantive and organizational matters related to the 2002 event. All negotiations should preferably take place and be completed during the intergovernmental preparatory process. Bearing in mind the challenges and complexity of the intergovernmental preparatory process for 2002, it would seem important to hold the first preparatory session at an earlier time than the intergovernmental preparations for the regular sessions of the Commission normally start.

37. The first and second preparatory sessions should undertake a comprehensive and critical review of the implementation of the outcome of UNCED, in particular Agenda 21. These two preparatory sessions should result in an agreed text for a review document containing the conclusions of deliberations, including priority areas where further action is needed and a future work programme of the Commission. As suggested by Governments, the review should be undertaken on the basis of the reports from Governments, national councils and/or focal points for sustainable development, regional reports, reports from the secretariats of the conventions that are related to Agenda 21, and a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21 carried out by the United Nations system for the 10-year period since UNCED. Governments also suggested that the review include an assessment of the mechanisms established to support the implementation of Agenda 21 with a view to improving the coordination and comprehensive implementation of Agenda 21. The first and second preparatory sessions could include multi-stakeholder dialogues, hearings or other innovative arrangements to ensure participatory, high-quality preparations.

38. Based on the agreed text for a "review" document, the third and final preparatory session should consider a concise document of a more strategic and political nature, together with other possible forward-looking and action-oriented initiatives to promote sustainable development. This document should reconfirm the need for an integrated and strategic, participatory approach to sustainable development, and address the main challenges and opportunities faced by the international community in the further implementation of Agenda 21. A high-level segment could therefore be an integral part of the third preparatory session. Such a document, adopted by Governments at the 2002 event, would reinvigorate, at the highest political level, the global commitment to a renewed North-South partnership and a higher level of international solidarity to further promote sustainable development.

C. Preparation of documentation

39. At its fifty-fifth session, the General Assembly may consider the proposals for analytical reports on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General. Governments, however, encouraged the United Nations system to start preparing substantive contributions as soon as possible. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/218, invited the regional commissions, the relevant functional commissions that are implementing chapters of Agenda 21, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the secretariats of the environment-related conventions to make substantive contributions to the review process.

40. In addition to the formal documentation needed to support the deliberations, the 2002 review process provides an opportunity for disseminating a variety of related reports, background documents and publications, which could be made available. The preparations of these contributions should start well in advance and their results be made available prior to the commencement of the intergovernmental preparatory process.

41. As a contribution of the United Nations system, the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development decided on the early preparation of the second ACC statement on sustainable development. Such a statement should build on the conclusions of the ACC statement submitted to the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, in 1997. It should examine whether progress since 1997 has made sustainable development to an overarching framework for work in the United Nations in the social, economic and environmental fields, as recommended in the 1997 ACC statement. It could also outline the specific role that the United Nations system could play in achieving the goals of sustainable development, together with other international organizations.

Annex

Main issues on the agenda of the ninth session of the Commission

1. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work 1998-2002, the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its ninth session in 2001, will consider the following main issues:

(a) Sectoral theme: atmosphere/energy;

(b) Economic sector: energy/transport;

(c) Cross-sectoral theme: information for decision-making and participation and international cooperation for an enabling environment.

I. Sectoral theme: atmosphere/energy

A. Atmosphere

2. The General Assembly in its resolution S-19/2, stated that political will and concerted efforts by the international community, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, are required to ensure that the global climate and atmosphere are not further damaged, with irreversible consequences for future generations. The production, conversion, distribution and end use of energy are the main source of greenhouse gas emissions. They also contribute significantly to other pollutants — sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxide and particulates — with attendant implications to transboundary pollution. The ultimate goal that all countries share is to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. There is a need for:

(a) Effective policies and measures for improved energy efficiency, accelerated development of renewable sources of energy and development, and the application of new technology for fossil fuels and other energy sources aimed at significant reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants;

(b) International cooperation in the implementation of chapter 9 of Agenda 21, in particular in the transfer of technology to and capacity-building in developing countries;

(c) Strengthening systematic observational networks to identify the possible onset and distribution of climate change and assess potential impacts, particularly at the regional level;

(d) Strengthening the Montreal Protocol to the Convention and ratifying the Copenhagen Amendment to the Montreal Protocol;

(e) Countering rising levels of transboundary air pollution, including through appropriate regional cooperation to reduce pollution levels.

B. Energy

3. A major challenge for the international community is to ensure that energy systems will contribute to the goals of sustainable development. Currently, energy production, conversion and use have discernible adverse effects on the environment: locally because energy-related emissions contaminate air, water and soil, and globally because it enhances the greenhouse effect. The development of energy systems that would meet social, economic and environmental objectives of sustainable development will depend on the urgency with which the international community addresses the need to move towards more sustainable patterns of production, distribution and use of energy. The realization of the benefits of such systems will depend considerably on whether related policy, financial, technological and institutional issues are properly addressed and resolved.

4. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development, which met for its first session from 6 to 10 March 2000 in New York, deliberated on the preparations for the ninth session of the Commission, on energy issues. This involved identifying key issues related to energy and sustainable development, discussion of the programme of work for the time period between the first and second sessions of the Group of Experts and the formulation of a provisional agenda for its second session. In reviewing the themes of energy and sustainable development, due consideration was given to the implementation of the issues of financial resources, transfer of technology,

capacity-building and foreign investment flows to developing countries, and to the importance of national policies.

5. During the deliberations, key issues were identified that represent areas where the international community can promote a movement towards energy systems in support of sustainable development. The following key issues were of particular importance to the participants: accessibility of energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, advanced fossil fuel technologies, nuclear energy technologies, rural energy, energy and transportation, technology transfer, capacity-building, mobilization of financial resources, and international and regional cooperation.

II. Economic sector: energy/transport

6. In its resolution S-19/2, the General Assembly stated that the transport sector and mobility in general have an essential role to play in economic and social development, and transportation needs will undoubtedly increase. Over the next 20 years, transportation is expected to be the major driving force behind a growing world demand for energy. The transport sector is the largest end-user of energy in developed countries and the fastest growing one in most developing countries. Current patterns of transportation, with their dominant patterns of energy use, are not sustainable and on the basis of current trends may compound the environmental problems that the world is facing as well as impact on health. There is a need for:

(a) Promoting integrated transport policies;

(b) Integrating land-use and urban, peri-urban and rural transport planning, taking into account the need to protect ecosystems;

(c) Measures to mitigate the negative impact of transportation on the environment, including measures to improve efficiency and efficiency standards in the transportation sector;

(d) Further studies on the use of economic instruments for the mitigation of the negative environmental impact of aviation;

(e) Accelerating the phase-out of the use of leaded gasoline;

(f) Promoting voluntary guidelines for environmentally friendly transport, and actions for reducing vehicle emissions of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and volatile organic compounds;

(g) Building partnerships at the national level, involving Governments, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, for strengthening transport infrastructures and developing innovative mass transport schemes.

III. Cross-sectoral theme: information for decision-making and participation and international cooperation for an enabling environment

A. Information for decision-making and participation

7. Particular action will be required on two major programme areas: (a) bridging the data gap and (b) improving the availability of information. The integration and informed use of available information in decision-making processes remains a key issue. There exist, however, considerable differences between geographical regions and countries at different stages of development, as to the availability of relevant primary data (e.g., in the area of sustainable development), the quality, comparability and frequency of data compilation and the subsequent quality of information systems. It should be noted that the Government of Canada has offered to host a meeting of experts on chapter 40 of Agenda 21 in preparation for the ninth session of the Commission.

8. It should be suggested to focus the deliberations at the ninth session on a set of priority issues with the objective of identifying options for further actions. Such priority issues could include:

(a) Further developing indicators as tools to support national decision-making processes, taking into account the work undertaken in the context of the Commission's work programme on indicators of sustainable development;

(b) Developing methodologies to enhance the compatibility of data that are collected from different sources;

(c) Enhancing the institutional and human capacities, in particular of developing countries, for data collection, analysis and assessment and for the monitoring and reporting process;

(d) Enhancing the use of global information systems and map-based information tools;

(e) Improving the access of the public to information related to sustainable development, including through the use of multi-media technologies and tools, such as animated graphical presentations;

(f) Addressing problems of non-uniform standards and methods for handling information and issues related to intellectual property rights.

B. International cooperation for an enabling environment

9. Global change continues to accelerate. The further globalization of world markets, the increase of private-sector finance flows, the widening gap between rich and poor, the world's population passing the six billion mark, and the increasing degradation of the natural environment, with consequences for resource pressure, have all opened up new opportunities but also created new problems for sustainable development.

10. In the debate at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Governments stated that globalization has created a new imperative for international dialogue and cooperation. They also recognized that the United Nations is in a unique position to foster international cooperation by addressing the impact of changes in the enabling environment on development, which have emerged as a result of globalization and the technological progress. In its resolution 54/218, the General Assembly called upon the Commission *inter alia*, to play its role in assessing the opportunities and challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development.

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National reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Subsequent to the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, activities related to national reporting have focused on the following elements: (a) facilitating national reporting to the eighth session of the Commission; (b) preparation of guidelines for the eighth session of the Commission; (c) preparation of an analytical report entitled "Sustainable agriculture and rural development: trends in national implementation", based on national reports, as well as preparation of background documents; (d) early preparations to facilitate reporting to the Commission at its ninth session; (e) preparation of country profiles for the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be held in 2002; (f) updating and maintenance of the United Nations system-wide sustainable development web site.

I. National reporting to the Commission at its eighth session

2. The Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex) states, in paragraph 115, that national reports on the implementation of Agenda 21 have proved to be a valuable means of sharing information at the international and regional levels and, even more important, of providing a focus for the coordination of issues related to sustainable development at the national level within individual countries; accordingly, in paragraph 133 (b), the Programme states that national reporting should continue through voluntary national communications or reports.

3. Consistent with the agenda established in the Commission's multi-year programme of work, guidelines for national reporting were prepared by the Secretariat, in consultation with task managers, on the following issues: (a) integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources; (b) sustainable agriculture and rural development; (c) forest; (d) finance; and (e) trade. At the end of May 1999, the guidelines were sent simultaneously in English, French and Spanish, by mail and where possible by electronic mail, to the respective permanent representatives to the United Nations in New York and the focal points of all countries. The deadline requested was 31 August 1999.

4. By mid-March 2000, reports had been received from the following 53 countries: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Norway, Pacific Islands, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Republic of

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Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan.

II. Analytical report on sustainable agriculture and rural development: trends in national implementation

5. In its decisions 7/5 of April 1999 and 6/5 of April 1998, the Commission stressed the importance of continuing to take full advantage of the information provided by Governments to the Commission, on a voluntary basis, especially in view of the comprehensive review of the implementation of Agenda 21, to take place in 2002. The Commission emphasized the need to draw more fully on the information contained in those national reports or relevant information submitted to the Commission, and requested the Secretariat to process and compile, on a sectoral basis, the information provided by Governments in accordance with the issues contained in its multi-year programme of work.

6. Consequently, the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Sustainable agriculture and rural development: trends in national implementation" (E/CN.17/2000/5) examines the progress made towards sustainable agriculture and rural development based on the information that Governments provided in their national reports to the Commission in 1997 and by mid-January 2000. The report analyses a total of 133 national reports.

7. Consistent with Agenda 21 programme areas on sustainable agriculture and rural development, the report focuses on major policy trends, programmes and activities in these areas by region and subregion.

III. National reporting to the Commission at its ninth session

8. The Secretariat is in the process of preparing guidelines for the ninth session of the Commission. These guidelines, which will refer to reporting on atmosphere/energy (sectoral theme), information for decision-making and participation and international cooperation for an enabling environment (cross-sectoral theme), and energy/transport (economic sector/major group), should be transmitted to Governments by the end of May 2000 in English, French and Spanish.

9. The deadline requested for submitting national reports to the Secretariat will be September 2000. Should national information be available within that time-frame, it will have a greater impact on the inter-sessional preparations for the ninth session of the Commission as well as on the respective analytical report of the Secretary-General.

IV. Preparations of national reporting for the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be held in 2002

10. As mandated in Commission decision 7/5, paragraph 2 (f), the Secretariat is collecting inputs from member States on how to improve the guidelines for the elaboration of national reports after 2002. A report to this effect will be submitted to the Commission in 2001, as part of the preparations for the comprehensive review of the implementation of Agenda 21.

11. As mandated in Commission decision 7/5, paragraph 2 (g), the Secretariat is in the process of preparing country profiles to complement those presented during the five-year review held by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session in 1997, for submission to the General Assembly for the comprehensive review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be held in the year 2002.

12. Tables identifying national reports not yet submitted as well as those that have been submitted to the Commission since 1994 are contained in the annex.

V. United Nations system-wide sustainable development web site

13. As reported at earlier sessions, the United Nations system-wide sustainable development web site (at http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natlinfo/) contains the information provided by Governments in their national reports to the Commission, on a country-by-country and issue-by-issue basis. The Secretariat continues to update the web site with new information as Governments submit it.

Annex

Preparation of country profiles for the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be held in 2002

1. The National Information Analysis Unit is in the process of preparing country profiles for 2002 to complement those presented during the five-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21 held by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, in 1997.

2. By 2001, draft country profiles will be sent to all reporting countries for their review. Upon their review, the Unit will proceed to finalize and publish the 2002 country profiles series.

3. As reported at previous sessions of the Commission, the Secretariat continues to update the web site with new information as Governments submit it.

4. For queries to the National Information Analysis Unit, please telephone:

Hiroko-Morita-Lou	(212) 963-8813
Maria Mercedes Sánchez	(212) 963-9421

National reports not yet submitted in preparation for the 10-year review in 2002

1. Afghanistan
2. Andorra
3. Angola
4. Azerbaijan
5. Belize
6. Bhutan
7. Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. Burkina Faso
9. Burundi
10. Cambodia
11. Cape Verde
12. Central African Republic
13. Chad
14. Comoros
15. Congo
16. Cyprus
17. Democratic People's Republic of Korea
18. Democratic Republic of the Congo
19. Djibouti
20. Dominica
21. Equatorial Guinea
22. Eritrea
23. Ethiopia
24. Gabon
25. Grenada
26. Guatemala
27. Guinea
28. Jordan
29. Kenya
30. Kiribati
31. Kuwait
32. Kyrgyzstan
33. Lao People's Democratic Republic
34. Latvia
35. Lesotho
36. Liberia
37. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
38. Liechtenstein
39. Mali
40. Malta
41. Marshall Islands
42. Mauritania
43. Micronesia
44. Mozambique
45. Namibia
46. Nauru
47. Oman
48. Palau
49. Papua New Guinea
50. Peru
51. Rwanda
52. Saint Kitts and Nevis
53. Saint Lucia
54. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
55. Samoa
56. San Marino
57. Seychelles
58. Sierra Leone
59. Solomon Islands
60. Somalia
61. Sudan
62. Tajikistan
63. Togo
64. Tonga
65. Trinidad and Tobago
66. Turkmenistan
67. United Arab Emirates
68. Vanuatu
69. Yemen
70. Zambia

National reports submitted since 1994 to the Commission on Sustainable Development for which country profiles will be prepared for 2002 (national information is available at the web site; see main report, para. 11)

1. Albania
2. Algeria
3. Antigua and Barbuda
4. Argentina
5. Armenia
6. Australia
7. Austria
8. Bahamas
9. Bahrain
10. Bangladesh
11. Barbados
12. Belarus
13. Belgium
14. Benin
15. Bolivia
16. Botswana
17. Brazil
18. Brunei Darussalam
19. Bulgaria
20. Cameroon
21. Canada
22. Chile
23. China
24. Colombia
25. Costa Rica
26. Côte d'Ivoire
27. Croatia
28. Cuba
29. Czech Republic
30. Denmark
31. Dominican Republic
32. Ecuador
33. Egypt
34. El Salvador
35. Estonia
36. Fiji
37. Finland
38. France
39. Gambia
40. Georgia
41. Germany
42. Ghana
43. Greece
44. Guinea-Bissau
45. Guyana
46. Haiti
47. Honduras
48. Hungary
49. Iceland
50. India
51. Indonesia
52. Iran (Islamic Republic of)
53. Iraq
54. Ireland
55. Israel
56. Italy
57. Jamaica
58. Japan
59. Kazakhstan
60. Lebanon
61. Lithuania
62. Luxembourg
63. Madagascar
64. Malawi
65. Malaysia
66. Maldives
67. Mauritius
68. Mexico
69. Monaco
70. Mongolia
71. Morocco
72. Myanmar
73. Nepal
74. Netherlands
75. New Zealand
76. Nicaragua
77. Niger
78. Nigeria
79. Norway
80. Pakistan
81. Panama
82. Paraguay
83. Philippines
84. Poland
85. Portugal
86. Qatar
87. Republic of Korea
88. Republic of Moldova
89. Romania
90. Russian Federation
91. Sao Tome and Principe
92. Saudi Arabia
93. Senegal
94. Singapore
95. Slovakia
96. Slovenia
97. South Africa
98. Spain
99. Sri Lanka
100. Suriname
101. Swaziland
102. Sweden
103. Switzerland
104. Syrian Arab Republic
105. Thailand
106. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
107. Tunisia
108. Turkey
109. Uganda
110. Ukraine
111. United Kingdom
112. United Republic of Tanzania
113. United States of America
114. Uruguay
115. Uzbekistan
116. Venezuela
117. Viet Nam
118. Yugoslavia
119. Zimbabwe

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Other matters

Follow-up work on voluntary initiatives and agreements

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The ongoing multi-stakeholder process on voluntary initiatives and agreements was initiated by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session in April 1998. In response to proposals made by stakeholders during the session's multi-stakeholder dialogue segment on the role of industry, the Commission supported the idea of a multi-stakeholder process to identify the key elements that could be considered in a review of voluntary initiatives and agreements.[1] In follow-up to the Commission's decision, a steering group composed of representatives from business, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat was created to coordinate the activities aiming to identify the key elements of voluntary initiatives and agreements. Among other things, the steering group organized a multi-stakeholder consultation meeting with participants from the three stakeholder groups, and Governments of developed and developing countries, as well as UNEP and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in Toronto, Canada. This consultative meeting identified a set of key elements on voluntary initiatives and agreements. The outcome of the Toronto meetings as well as other products of the work in the period 1998-1999 was reported by the Commission secretariat to the Commission at its seventh session (see E/CN.17/1999/12).

2. The Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session[2] noted the input made by the stakeholders at the Toronto meeting, recognized the value of continued multi-stakeholder processes and consultations to further the understanding of the potential and impact of voluntary initiatives and agreements in achieving sustainable development, and requested the process to continue including its multi-stakeholder nature. Among other things, the Commission requested further work in this area including information products on voluntary initiatives and agreements in general and on their potential use and impact in developing countries, as well as information tools, such as the tool kit on voluntary initiatives and agreements proposed at the Toronto meeting.

3. Based on the decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development and a formal request from the stakeholder partners, the Commission secretariat continued to act as a facilitator of the multi-stakeholder steering group to coordinate further work on voluntary initiatives and agreements. In this role, the

* E/CN.17/2000/1.

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Commission secretariat organized periodic teleconference calls with the partners (once every four to five weeks), facilitated exchanges of information by e-mail and other means, and assisted the partners in developing a work programme for the steering group.

4. The steering group considered a number of approaches to respond to the requests of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session. The partners' discussions focused on developing the tool kit on voluntary initiatives and agreements, identifying further information needs, identifying relevant processes organized by stakeholder groups (individually or jointly), explored the means for testing the key elements identified in Toronto and assessed the need for, and feasibility of, further consultative meetings with Governments and stakeholders.

5. Further consultation meetings similar to the Toronto meeting of March 1999 were not planned owing to the need to bring to maturity other issues under discussion. The steering group did agree to organize a small consultative forum that would bring together the main stakeholder partners (business, trade unions and non-governmental organizations), together with a number of developing country Governments and the developed country Governments that had participated in the Toronto meeting. Such a meeting is scheduled for the second week of the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The aim of this forum is to clarify, particularly through discussions with developing countries, what kind of information needs to be generated on the potential use and impact of voluntary initiatives and agreements in developing countries. In addition to this forum, a one-day meeting will be organized by the non-governmental organization component of the steering group (possibly on 28 April 2000) to take an analytical look at three voluntary codes of conduct developed by international organizations.[1]

6. Discussions on the further development of the tool kit idea have been inconclusive. Although all partners agree that a tool kit would be very useful and should be produced, agreement on its scope and content has not been reached. Partners plan to continue their discussions on the tool kit and hope to complete such a product by the tenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development as an input to the 10-year review of progress in 2002.

7. For its part, the Commission on Sustainable Development secretariat has completed analytical and case studies related to voluntary initiatives and agreements. The first is a background paper that the secretariat has commissioned on an analytic overview of the existing processes focusing on voluntary initiatives and agreements and their reviews in intergovernmental and governmental forums. The consultative forum mentioned above will use this study as a background paper.

8. The second initiative is a joint project of the Commission on Sustainable Development secretariat and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Technology, Business and Environment Program of the Center for Technology, Policy, and Industrial Development. The partners expect to launch the project in May 2000, pending the availability of funding. The focus of this project is to examine the potentials of voluntary initiatives and agreements in a selected number of developing countries and one country with an economy in transition. The preliminary list of countries where this study will be conducted include Brazil, China, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Mexico and South Africa. The methodology will be based on MIT's prior analyses of voluntary initiatives and agreements, such as those focusing on the Responsible Care programme of the Chemical Manufacturers Association, and the analytical framework it has helped to develop.

9. In response to the request of the Commission on Sustainable Development to make information on voluntary initiatives and agreements available electronically, the Commission secretariat has created a web site (www.un.org/esa/sustdev/via.htm) where interested parties can find the key elements identified in Toronto as well as a collection of profiles of existing voluntary initiatives and agreements. Other products such as the tool kit, and analytic studies currently in progress will be included in this site, which also furnishes links to relevant actors such as the members of the steering group.

Notes

[1] "The Commission noted the potential value of a review of voluntary initiatives and agreements to give content and direction to the dialogue between Governments and the representatives of industry, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and international organizations. As a first step, representatives of industry,

trade unions and non-governmental organizations should examine voluntary initiatives and agreements to identify those elements that can be considered for this review" (*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9* (E/1998/29), chap. I, sect. B, decision 6/2, sect. D, para. 18).

[2] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 9* (E/1999/29), chap. I, sect. C, decision 7/6.

[3] The list of codes to be reviewed in this workshop include the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (Rome, FAO, 1986); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/World Health Organization (WHO) International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (Geneva, WHO, 1981); and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines for multinational enterprises.

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Review of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources

Note by the Secretary-General

1. At its sixth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development recognized the important tasks for United Nations agencies and programmes and other international bodies in helping developing countries to implement their integrated water resources development, management and protection programmes and policies. The Commission also invited the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21, to accelerate the implementation of chapter 18 by considering action to, *inter alia*: (a) identify gaps or inconsistencies in the implementation of programmes of its constituent organizations by assessing the main features and effectiveness of the implementation of those activities and ensure that the mainstreaming of gender perspectives is appropriately included; (b) increase efficiency in programme delivery and possibilities for joint programming; and (c) explore the potential of cooperative arrangements and, where appropriate, take into account the experience gained in existing programmes in the United Nations system.

2. In its decision 6/1, of which the Economic and Social Council took note in its decision 1998/217, the Commission also invited the Secretary-General to submit a report to it prior to its eighth session on progress of the Subcommittee, as task manager of chapter 18 of Agenda 21, in the activities mentioned above.[1]

3. In response to that request, at its nineteenth session, in 1998, the Subcommittee decided to obtain the services of an independent Consultant to assist it in reviewing its methods of work, and thus also to contribute to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General mentioned above.[2] It was also agreed that the Consultant would (a) carry out an analysis to identify significant gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies in current programmes, based on relevant documents and self-assessments from Subcommittee member organizations and evaluation interviews by phone, mail or direct contact; (b) provide recommendations on options to increase programme efficiency and joint programming among Subcommittee member organizations; (c) recommend ways in which the Subcommittee could enhance cooperation with institutions outside the United Nations system engaged in significant work in the field of water resources, such as the Global Water Partnership, the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council and the World Water Council; and (d) take into account in the analysis and recommendations the relevant experience gained in existing programmes of the United Nations system, including efforts to mainstream appropriate gender perspectives.

4. At its nineteenth session, the Subcommittee also agreed that in order to assist the Subcommittee in strengthening its ability to carry out the functions entrusted to it by the Inter-Agency Committee on

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Sustainable Development (IACSD), including the implementation of recommendations arising from the sixth session of the Commission, the Consultant would also (a) analyse the current procedures, methods of work and outputs of the Subcommittee in relation to the terms of reference and to methods of operation of other ACC subcommittees, in particular the Subcommittee on Nutrition and the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas; (b) examine options to improve the Subcommittee's communication with both water sector stakeholders and delegations of United Nations Member States; and (c) recommend ways in which the Subcommittee could enhance its coordination role, improve the transparency and visibility of its work and accelerate the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

5. At its twentieth session, held at Geneva from 4 to 8 October 1999, the Subcommittee examined the Consultant's first draft report. That report identified four possible options: (a) the status quo; (b) the improvement of the Subcommittee's procedures; (c) the improvement of procedures and establishment of new priorities, including proposals to obtain the necessary additional resources; and (d) abolition of the Subcommittee if other existing freshwater coordinating mechanisms were considered. Given that options (a) and (d) were generally rejected by the Subcommittee, most of the ensuing discussion focused on the need to improve procedures.

6. Members of the Subcommittee agreed that in general, current procedures needed substantial improvement and that new priorities should be explored, as well as the identification of its core areas of activity, including the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21 and the publication of a biennial *World Water Development Report*. It was also stressed that the Subcommittee should focus on its comparative advantages, such as (a) the moral authority of the United Nations system; (b) its access to Governments and intergovernmental processes; (c) its being an effective tool of advocacy; (d) its ability to define higher-level policies and issues; (e) its catalytic role in promoting global policies and guidelines; and (f) its unique role as a forum for discussion of differing views of various organizations of the United Nations system involved in the field of freshwater resources.

7. It was also agreed that the Subcommittee secretariat (whose services are currently provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on a part-time basis) should be more proactive in the identification, promotion and coordination of specific issues, and that the agenda of future sessions should focus on a few strategic issues as opposed to a comprehensive agenda. In case it were decided that the secretariat needed to be reinforced to carry out more functions, a work plan for fund-raising should also be formulated with a view to obtaining additional financial and human resources. The Subcommittee recommended (as subsequently endorsed by IACSD) that its future sessions consist of a three-day core meeting, a one-day session for ad hoc workshops and an extra day for informal discussions with selected partners outside the United Nations system. In order to revitalize the three-day core meeting, interested Subcommittee member organizations would be requested to submit two-page summaries of current and future activities with a view to promoting inter-agency cooperation. It was further decided that all substantive agenda items in future sessions should be accompanied by concise issue papers.

8. The Subcommittee requested the Consultant to take account of the above-mentioned decisions in the preparation of the final draft of her report, which would be discussed during a special session of the Subcommittee to be held in March 2000, and to contribute to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the Commission at its eighth session.

9. The final report of the Consultant notes that in the absence of a United Nations central organization with overall responsibility for freshwater policy, the Subcommittee provides for internal system networking and contributes to the collection of information on United Nations activities and reports on broad issues related to water management. The report stresses that a strong case can be made that an intra-United Nations networking function is essential, but that case depends on the belief in the centrality of the United Nations system. The Consultant questions the value of reports prepared for intergovernmental bodies vis-à-vis the efforts made to prepare them, and concludes that it is essential that procedures be changed within the Subcommittee to permit the two core functions — system-wide networking and response to intergovernmental requests — to be performed more effectively.

10. The report of the Consultant also questions what the Subcommittee can do over and above those two

core functions to add value in a multi-player and multipolar world in which the goal to be achieved is a blend of sustainable, equitable policies and practices for integrated water resource management at the local and river basin levels. It emphasizes that the comparative advantage of the Subcommittee is its capacity to influence Government policies and programmes towards consistency with the standards and norms for freshwater management established by the United Nations system and other recommendations and outcomes of water or water-related conferences and meetings. The United Nations prestige and relationship of trust with Governments around the world are seen as useful for such leverage. According to the Consultant, the Subcommittee agenda should therefore be centred on those issues which go beyond the capacities of a single member organization and for which the ACC system is the most logical organizing entity. The report of the Consultant concludes that with different working methods and a reasonable increase in secretariat resources, the Subcommittee could accelerate the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

11. In reviewing the Consultant's report at its special session, held at The Hague on 23 March 2000, the Subcommittee made a number of decisions for recommendation to IACSD regarding the seven main conclusions of the Consultant's report, which are listed below.

Conclusion 1

12. With or without new resources, the Subcommittee must change its working procedures to permit more effective networking at meetings and more efficient report production. Decisions which can be agreed via electronic mail should be adopted immediately. Specific issues on which immediate agreement might be sought include the organization of meetings, procedures for networking, procedures for transparency and membership. Only special issues on which no e-mail agreement were feasible should be dealt with in the annual Subcommittee session.

13. The Subcommittee at its special session authorized the Secretary to actively try to seek consensus on such issues, as appropriate.

Conclusion 2

14. Additional resources should be sought from the Commission and/or from donors; the case will be more persuasive if an agenda of activity has been adopted.

15. While the Subcommittee was informed that the Commission does not fund inter-agency activities, it was agreed that greater efforts should be made to seek additional resources from donors, particularly for concrete activities, such as the preparation of the forthcoming biennial United Nations *World Water Development Report*. Other issues will be examined during the next full session of the Subcommittee.

Conclusion 3

16. The Subcommittee must fulfil its undertaking to monitor national and international compliance with global policy frameworks, such as through the *World Water Development Report*.

17. This recommendation was adopted by the Subcommittee at its special session, after it was agreed that efforts would be made to monitor national and international implementation (as opposed to compliance), not only through the *World Water Development Report* but also through other activities related to the review of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

Conclusion 4

18. The Subcommittee could agree that when issues need urgent action by all or some of its members, the Chairperson and the Secretary should take on a galvanizing role, after some internal consultations.

19. This recommendation was agreed in general terms by the Subcommittee at its special session; which also recommended that the Subcommittee request a member organization or a small group of organizations to take the lead on its behalf when such urgent issues are identified. This is actually what has happened in the case of recent Subcommittee initiatives in the areas of arsenic contamination of drinking water sources and the preparation of the initial groundwork and brochure for the *World Water Development Report*.

Conclusion 5

20. If the Subcommittee decides to proceed with an enhanced series of activities, two major steps are necessary: a discussion of the proposed new methods of work and an agenda of proposed topics. With regard

to the latter, the Consultant recommends that the Subcommittee work programme translate the global goals into the following mechanisms and tools, usable at the national level, primarily focused on Governments: (a) an international freshwater data collection manual; (b) procedures for signalling the existence of urgent freshwater situations; (c) a single authoritative source on drinking water standards; (d) standard guidelines on water quality; (e) construction, delivery and service standards for freshwater; (f) incorporation of techniques and reality of transparency and public consultation into public management practices; (g) an enabling environment for community participation in water issues; and (h) investment in peri-urban areas.

21. While the Subcommittee agreed that these and other topics would be more carefully examined at its next full session, member organizations expressed their willingness to take the lead in the following areas: (a) drinking water standards (World Health Organization); (b) water quality guidelines (the United Nations Environment Programme through the Global Freshwater Quality Monitoring Programme); (c) participation of civil society (United Nations Children's Fund); (d) preparation of the *World Water Development Report* (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization); and (e) gender (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)). With regard to the new methods of work proposed by the Consultant, the Subcommittee at its special session decided to examine such proposals in detail during its next full session.

Conclusion 6

22. A Subcommittee substantive session is needed to look at the following question: "What is the gender issue in freshwater and what are the successful examples of women being integrated into the management of water systems?"

23. The Subcommittee at its special session unanimously agreed with this recommendation, and noted that the relationship between freshwater and gender would in fact be addressed in an issue paper to be submitted by UNDP at the next session of the Subcommittee, when the Subcommittee would decide on preparations for the substantive session on gender issues. The date and venue of that substantive session will also be decided in the forthcoming session of the Subcommittee.

Conclusion 7

24. The regional commissions are recommended to meet to determine how their current output and activities could benefit from cross-regional exchange. Other Subcommittee member organizations would, of course, be welcome to attend but the central focus should be regional commission programmes and regional needs. In addition, every Subcommittee session should have time set for reports on what is happening within regions to work towards integrated water resources management, to resolve shared water management and to work towards river basin management structures.

25. The Subcommittee at its special session unanimously agreed on the important role of the regional commissions in the work of the Subcommittee. It recommended that the regional commissions and other interested member organizations meet immediately before Subcommittee sessions to discuss regional issues and activities, and that they report on the outcome of such meetings to the main session of the Subcommittee. A standing item to deal with regional issues should also be included in the agenda of future sessions, starting with the forthcoming session, to be held at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at Bangkok from 16 to 20 October 2000. The standing agenda item for that session could focus on issues in the Asia and Pacific region. The Subcommittee also encouraged the regional commissions to organize workshops and other issue-oriented meetings focused on regional themes.

26. The final recommendations of the Subcommittee on the review of its methods of work will be submitted to the Administrative Committee on Coordination through IACSD. The final recommendations of the Subcommittee on the review of its methods of work can only be formally implemented after the official endorsement of IACSD.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9*, chap. I.B. (E/1998/29).

[2] According to the terms of reference of the consultancy — agreed during the nineteenth session of the Subcommittee — the Consultant was required to have (a) at least 15 years of international experience in

water resources planning, development and management; (b) thorough knowledge of the structure, operation and mandates of the organizations of the United Nations system; and (c) full understanding and familiarity with intergovernmental processes related to environment and development. Following an extensive search, the Secretary of the Subcommittee, in consultation with its Chairman, selected Margaret Catley Carlson, a respected authority in the field of freshwater resources whose international career, spanning 30 years at the highest levels of decision-making, has included positions as Chair of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council and Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. The consultancy was carried out with financial support from the United Kingdom Department for International Development through its Water and Environmental Health in London and Loughborough Resource Centre.